

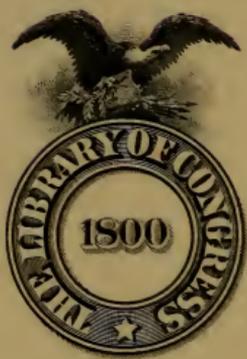


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# ARMAZINDY

BY

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY



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## ARMAZINDY

ARMAZINDY ;—fambily name  
*Ballenger*,—you'll find the same,  
As her daddy answered it,  
In the old War-rickords yit,—  
And, like him, she's airnt the good  
Will o' all the neighborhood.—  
Name ain't down in *History*,—  
But, i jucks! it *ort* to be!  
Folks is got respec' fer *her*—  
Armazindy Ballenger!—  
'Specially the ones 'at knows  
Fac's o' how her story goes  
From the start:—Her father blowed  
Up—eternally furloughed—  
When the old "Sultana" bu'st,  
And sich men wuz needed wusst.—  
Armazindy, 'bout fourteen-  
Year-old then—and thin and lean  
As a kill-dee,—but—*my la!*—  
Blamedest nerve you ever saw!  
The girl's mother'd *allus* ben  
Sickly—wuz consumed when  
Word come 'bout her husband.—So  
Folks predicted *she'd* soon go—

(Kind o' grief *I* understand,  
 Losin' *my* companion,—and  
 Still a widower—and still  
 Hinted at, like neighbors will!)  
 So, appinted, as folks said,  
 Ballenger a-bein' dead,  
 Widder, 'peared-like, gradjully,  
 Jes grieved after him tel *she*  
 Died, nex' Aprile wuz a year,—  
 And, in Armazindy's keer  
 Leavin' the two twins, as well  
 As her pore old miz'able  
 Old-maid aunty 'at had ben  
 Struck with palsy, and wuz then  
 Jes a he'pless charge on *her*—  
*Armazindy Ballenger.*

Jevver watch a primrose 'bout  
 Minute 'fore it blossoms out—  
 Kindo' loosen-like, and blow  
 Up its muscles, don't you know,  
 And, all suddent, bu'st and bloom  
 Out life-size?—Well, I presume  
 'At's the only measure I  
*Kin* size Armazindy by!—  
 Jes a *child*, *one* minute,—nex',  
*Woman-grown*, in all respec's

And intents and purposuz—  
'At's what Armazindy wuz!

Jes a *child*, I tell ye! Yit  
 She made things git up and git  
 Round that little farm o' hern!—  
 Shouldered all the whole concern;—  
 Feed the stock, and milk the cows—  
 Run the *farm* and run the *house*!—  
*Only* thing she didn't do  
 Wuz to plow and harvest too—  
 But the house and childern took  
 Lots o' keer—and had to look  
 After her old fittified  
 Grand-aunt.—Lord! ye could a-cried,  
 Seein' Armazindy smile,  
 'Peared-like, sweeter all the while!  
 And I've heerd her laugh and say:—  
 "Jes afore Pap marched away,  
 He says 'I depend on *you*,  
 Armazindy, come what may—  
 You must be a Soldier, too!'"

Neighbors, from the fust, 'ud come—  
 And she'd *let* 'em help her *some*,—  
 "Thanky, maam!" and "Thanky, sir!"  
 But no charity fer *her*!—

“*She* could raise the means to pay  
 Fer her farm-hands ever’ day  
 Sich wuz needed!”—And she *could*—  
 In cash-money jes as good  
 As farm-produc’s ever brung  
 Their perducer, *old* er young!  
 So folks humored her and smiled,  
 And at last wuz rickonciled  
 Fer to let her have her own  
 Way about it.—But a-goin’  
 Past to town, they’d stop and see  
 “Armazindy’s fambily,”  
 As they’d allus laugh and say,  
 And look sorry right away,  
 Thinkin’ of her Pap, and how  
 He’d indorse his “Soldier” now!

Course *she* couldn’t never be  
 Much in young folks’ company—  
 Plenty of *in-vites* to go,  
 But das’t leave the house, you know—  
 ’Less’n *Sund’ys* sometimes, when  
 Some old *Granny*’d come and ’ten’  
 Things, while Armazindy *has*  
 Got away fer Church er “Class.”  
 Most the youngsters *liked* her—and  
 ’Twuzn’t hard to understand,—

Fer, by time she wuz sixteen,  
 Purtier girl you never seen—  
 'Ceptin' she lacked schoolin', ner  
 Couldn't rag out stylisher—  
 Like some *neighbor*-girls, ner thumb  
 On their blame melodium,  
 Whilse their pore old mothers sloshed  
 Round the old back-porch and washed  
 Their clothes fer 'em—rubbed and scrubbed  
 Fer girls 'd ort to jes ben clubbed!

—And jes sich a girl wuz Jule  
 Reddinhouse.—*She'd* ben to school  
 At *New Thessaly*, i gum!—  
 Fool before, but that hepped *some*—  
 'Stablished-like more confidence  
 'At she *never* had no sense.  
 But she wuz a cunnin', sly,  
 Meek and lowly sorto' lie,  
 'At men-folks like me and you  
 B'lieves jes 'cause we ortn't to.—  
 Jes as purty as a snake,  
 And as *pizen*—Mercy sake!  
 Well, about them times it wuz,  
 Young Sol Stephens th'ashed fer us;  
 And we sent him over to  
 Armazindy's place to do

*Her* work fer her.—And-sir! Well—  
Mighty little else to tell,—  
Sol he fell in love with her—  
Armazindy Ballenger!

Bless ye!—'Li of all the love  
'At I've ever yit knowed of,  
That-air case o' theirn beat all!  
W'y, she *worshiped* him!—And Sol,  
'Peared-like, could a-kissed the sod  
(Sayin' is) where that girl trod!  
Went to town, she did, and bought  
Lot o' things 'at neighbors thought  
Mighty strange fer *her* to buy,—  
Raal chintz dress-goods—and 'way high!—  
Cut long in the skyrt,—also  
Gaiter-pair o' shoes, you know;  
And lace collar;—yes, and fine  
Stylish hat, with ivy-vine  
And red ribbons, and these-'ere  
Artificial flowers and queer  
Little beads and spangles, and  
Oysturch-feathers round the band!  
Wore 'em, Sund'ys, fer awhile—  
Kindo' went to church in style,  
Sol and Armazindy!—Tel  
It was noised round purty well

They wuz *promised*.—And they wuz—  
Sich news travels—well it does!—  
Pity 'at *that* did!—Fer jes  
That-air fac' and nothin' less  
Must a-putt it in the mind  
O' Jule Reddinhouse to find  
Out some dratted way to hatch  
Out *some* plan to break the match—  
'Cause she *done* it,—*How?* they's none  
Knows adzac'ly *what* she done;  
*Some* claims she writ letters to  
Sol s folks, up nigh Pleasant View  
Somers—and described, you see,  
"Armazindy's fambily"—  
Hintin' "ef Sol married *her*,  
He d jes be pervidin' fer  
Them-air twins o' hern, and old  
Palsied aunt 'at couldn't hold  
Spoon to mouth, and layin' near  
Bedrid on to eighteen year,  
And still likely, 'pearantly,  
To live out the century!"  
Well—whatever plan Jule laid  
Out to reach the p'int she made,  
It wuz *desper't*—And she won,  
Finully, by marryun'

Sol herse'f—*e-lopin'*, too,  
 With him, like she *had* to do,—  
 'Cause her folks 'ud allus swore  
 "Jule should never marry pore!"

This-here part the story I  
 Allus haf to hurry by,—  
 Way 'at Armazindy jes  
 Drapped back in her linsey dress,  
 And grabbed holt her loom, and shet  
 Her jaws square.—And ef she fret  
 Any 'bout it—never 'peared  
 Sign 'at *neighbors* seed er heerd;—  
 Most folks liked her all the more—  
 I know *I* did—certain-shore!—  
 (Course *I'd* knowed her *Pap*, and what  
*Stock* she come of.—Yes, and thought,  
 And think *yit*, no man on earth  
 'S worth as much as that girl's worth!)

As fer Jule and Sol, they had  
 Their sheer!—less o' good than bad!—  
 Her folks let her go.—They said,  
 "Spite o' them she'd made her bed  
 And must sleep in it!"—But she,  
 'Peared-like, didn't sleep so free  
 As she ust to—ner so *late*,  
 Ner so *fine*, I'm here to state!—

Sol wuz pore, of course, and she  
Wuzn't ust to poverty—  
Ner she didn't 'pear to jes  
'Filiate with lonesomeness,—  
'Cause Sol *he* wuz off and out  
With his th'asher nigh about  
Half the time; er, season done,  
He'd be off mi-anderun  
Round the country, here and there,  
Swoppin' hosses. Well, that-air  
Kindo' livin' didn't suit  
Jule a bit!—and then, to boot,  
*She* had now the keer o' two  
Her own childern—and to do  
Her own work and cookin'—yes,  
And sometimes fer *hands*, I guess,  
Well as fambily of her own.—  
Cut her pride clean to the bone!  
So how *could* the whole thing end?—  
She set down, one night, and penned  
A short note, like—'at she sewed  
On the childern's blanket—blowed  
Out the candle—pulled the door  
To close after her—and, shore-  
Footed as a cat is, clumb  
In a rigg there and left home,

With a man a-drivin' who  
 "Loved her ever fond and true,"  
 As her note went on to say,  
 When Sol read the thing next day.

Really didn't 'pear to be  
 Extry waste o' sympathy  
 Over Sol—pore feller!—Yit,  
 Sake o' them-air little bit  
 O' two *orphants*—as you might  
 Call 'em *then*, by law and right,—  
 Sol's old friends wuz sorry, and  
 Tried to hold him out their hand  
 Same as allus: But he'd flinch—  
 Tel, jes 'peared like, inch by inch,  
 He let *all* holts go; and so  
 Took to drinkin', don't you know,—  
 Tel, to make a long tale short,  
 He wuz fuller than he ort  
 To a-ben, at work one day  
 'Bout his th'asher, and give way,  
 Kindo'-like, and fell and ketched  
 In the beltin'.

.....Rid and fetched  
 Armazindy to him.—He  
 Begged me to.—But time 'at she  
 Reached his side, he smiled and *tried*  
 To speak—Couldn't. So he died.....

Hands all turned and left her there  
And went somers else—*some*where.  
Last, she called us back—in clear  
Voice as man'll ever hear—  
Clear and stiddy, 'peared to me,  
As her old Pap's ust to be.—  
Give us orders what to do  
'Bout the body—hepped us, too.  
So it wuz, Sol Stephens passed  
'N Armazindy's hands at last.  
More'n that, she claimed 'at she  
Had consent from him to be  
Mother to his children—now  
'Thout no parents anyhow.

*Yes-sir!* and she's *got* 'em, too,—  
Folks saw nothin' else 'ud do—  
So they let her have *her way*—  
Like she's doin' yit to-day!  
Years now, I've ben coaxin' her—  
Armazindy Ballenger—  
To in-large her fambily  
Jes *one* more by takin' *me*—  
Which I'm feared she never will,  
Though I'm lectioneerin' still.

## THE OLD TRUNDLE-BED

O THE old trundle-bed where I slept when a boy!  
What canopied king might not covet the joy?  
The glory and peace of that slumber of mine,  
Like a long, gracious rest in the bosom divine:  
The quaint, homely couch, hidden close from the light,  
But daintily drawn from its hiding at night.  
O a nest of delight, from the foot to the head,  
Was the queer little, dear little, old trundle-bed!

O the old trundle-bed, where I wondering saw  
The stars through the window, and listened with awe  
To the sigh of the winds as they tremblingly crept  
Through the trees where the robin so restlessly slept:  
Where I heard the low, murmurous chirp of the wren,  
And the katydid listlessly chirrup again,  
Till my fancies grew faint and were drowsily led  
Through the maze of the dreams of the old trundle-bed.

O the old trundle-bed! O the old trundle-bed!  
With its plump little pillow, and old-fashioned spread;  
Its snowy-white sheets, and the blankets above,  
Smoothed down and tucked round with the touches of  
love;

The voice of my mother to lull me to sleep  
With the old fairy-stories my memories keep  
Still fresh as the lilies that bloom o'er the head  
Once bowed o'er my own in the old trundle-bed.

## NATURAL PERVERSITIES

I AM not prone to moralize  
In scientific doubt  
On certain facts that Nature tries  
To puzzle us about,—  
For I am no philosopher  
Of wise elucidation,  
But speak of things as they occur,  
From simple observation.

I notice *little* things—to wit:—  
I never missed a train  
Because I didn't *run* for it;  
I never knew it rain  
That my umbrella wasn't lent,—  
Or, when in my possession,  
The sun but wore, to all intent,  
A jocular expression.

I never knew a creditor  
To dun me for a debt  
But I was "cramped" or "busted"; or  
I never knew one yet,  
When I had plenty in my purse,  
To make the least invasion,—  
As I, accordingly perverse,  
Have courted no occasion.

Nor do I claim to comprehend  
What Nature has in view  
In giving us the very friend  
To trust we oughtn't to.—  
But so it is: The trusty gun  
Disastrously exploded  
Is always sure to be the one  
We didn't think was loaded.

Our moaning is another's mirth,—  
And what is worse by half,  
We say the funniest thing on earth  
And never raise a laugh:  
Mid friends that love us overwell,  
And sparkling jests and liquor,  
Our hearts somehow are liable  
To melt in tears the quicker.

We reach the wrong when most we seek  
The right; in like effect,  
We stay the strong and not the weak—  
Do most when we neglect.—  
Neglected genius—truth be said—  
As wild and quick as tinder,  
The more you seek to help ahead  
The more you seem to hinder.

I've known the least the greatest, too—  
And, on the selfsame plan,  
The biggest fool I ever knew  
Was quite a little man:  
We find we ought, and then we won't—  
We prove a thing, then doubt it,—  
Know *everything* but when we don't  
Know *anything* about it.

---

THE OLD SCHOOL-CHUM

HE puts the poem by, to say  
His eyes are not themselves to-day!

A sudden glamour o'er his sight—  
A something vague, indefinite—

An oft-recurring blur that blinds  
The printed meaning of the lines,

And leaves the mind all dusk and dim  
In swimming darkness—strange to him!

It is not childishness, I guess,—  
Yet something of the tenderness

That used to wet his lashes when  
A boy seems troubling him again;—

The old emotion, sweet and wild,  
That drove him truant when a child,

That he might hide the tears that fell  
Above the lesson—"Little Nell."

And so it is he puts aside  
The poem he has vainly tried

To follow; and, as one who sighs  
In failure, through a poor disguise

Of smiles, he dries his tears, to say  
His eyes are not themselves to-day.

## WRITIN' BACK TO THE HOME-FOLKS

MY dear old friends—It jes beats all,  
The way you write a letter  
So's ever' *last* line beats the *first*,  
And ever' *next-un*'s better!—  
W'y, ever' fool-thing you putt down  
You make so *interestin'*,  
A feller, readin' of em all,  
Can't tell which is the *best-un*.

It's all so comfortin' and good,  
'Pears-like I almost *hear* ye  
And git more sociabler, you know,  
And hitch my cheer up near ye  
And jes smile on ye like the sun  
Acrosst the whole per-rairies  
In Aprile when the thaw's begun  
And country couples marries.

It's all so good-old-fashioned like  
To *talk* jes like we're *thinkin'*,  
Without no hidin' back o' fans  
And giggle-un and winkin',  
Ner sizin' how each-other's dressed—  
Like some is allus doin',—  
“*Is Marthy Ellen's basque ben turned*  
Er shore-enough a new-un!”—

Er "ef Steve's city-friend haint jes  
 'A *leetle* kindo'-sorto'"—  
 Er "wears them-air blame eye-glasses  
 Jes 'cause he hadn't ort to?"—  
 And so straight on, *dad-libitum*,  
 Tel all of us feels, *someway*,  
 Jes like our "comp'ny" wuz the best  
 When we git up to come 'way!

That's why I like *old* friends like you,—  
 Jes 'cause you're so *abidin'*.—  
 Ef I was built to live "*fer keeps*,"  
 My principul residin'  
 Would be amongst the folks 'at kep'  
 Me allus *thinkin'* of 'em,  
 And sorto' eechin' all the time  
 To tell 'em how I love 'em.—

Sich folks, you know, I jes love so  
 I wouldn't live without 'em,  
 Er couldn't even drap asleep  
 But what I *dreamp'* about 'em,—  
 And ef we minded God, I guess  
 We'd *all* love one-another  
 Jes like one fam'bly,—me and Pap  
 And Madaline and Mother.

## THE BLIND GIRL

IF I might see his face to-day!—

He is so happy now!—To hear  
His laugh is like a roundelay—

So ringing-sweet and clear!

His step—I heard it long before  
He bounded through the open door  
To tell his marriage.—Ah! so kind—  
So good he is!—And I—so blind!

But thus he always came to me—

Me, first of all, he used to bring  
His sorrow to—his ecstasy—

His hopes and everything;  
And if I joyed with him or wept,  
It was not long *the music* slept,—  
And if he sung, or if I played—  
Or both,—we were the braver made.

I grew to know and understand

His every word at every call,—  
The gate-latch hinted, and his hand

In mine confessed it all:

He need not speak one word to me—  
He need not sigh—I need not see,—  
But just the one touch of his palm,  
And I would answer—song or psalm.

He wanted recognition—name—  
He hungered so for higher things,—  
The altitudes of power and fame,  
And all that fortune brings :  
Till, with his great heart fevered thus,  
And aching as impetuous,  
I almost wished sometimes that *he*  
Were blind and patient made, like me.

But he has won!—I knew he would.—  
Once in the mighty Eastern mart,  
I knew his music only could  
Be sung in every heart!  
And when he proudly sent me this  
From out the great metropolis,  
I bent above the graven score  
And, weeping, kissed it o'er and o'er.—

And yet not blither sing the birds  
Than this glad melody,—the tune  
As sweetly wedded with the words  
As flowers with middle-June ;  
Had he not *told* me, I had known  
It was composed of love alone—  
His love for *her*.—And she can see  
His happy face eternally!—

While I—O God, forgive, I pray!—

    Forgive me that I did so long  
To look upon his face to-day!—

    I know the wish was wrong.—  
Yea, I am thankful that my sight  
Is shielded safe from such delight:—  
I can pray better, with this blur  
Of blindness—both for him and her.

## WE DEFER THINGS

WE say and we say and we say,  
We promise, engage and declare,  
Till a year from tomorrow is yesterday,  
And yesterday is—Where?

## THE MUSKINGUM VALLEY

THE Muskingum Valley!—How longin' the gaze  
A feller throws back on its long summer-days,  
When the smiles of its blossoms and *my* smiles wuz one-  
And-the-same, from the rise to the set o' the sun :  
Wher' the hills sloped as soft as the dawn down to noon,  
And the river run by like an old fiddle-tune,  
And the hours glided past as the bubbles 'ud glide,  
All so loaferin'-like, 'long the path o' the tide.

In the Muskingum Valley—it 'peared like the skies  
Looked lovin' on me as my own mother's eyes,  
While the laughin'-sad song of the stream seemed to be  
Like a lullaby angels was wastin' on me—  
Tel, swimmin' the air, like the gossamer's thread,  
'Twixt the blue underneath and the blue overhead,  
My thoughts went a-stray in that so-to-speak realm  
Wher' Sleep bared her breast as a piller fer them.

In the Muskingum Valley, though far, far a-way,  
I know that the winter is bleak there to-day—  
No bloom ner perfume on the brambles er trees—  
Wher' the buds used to bloom, now the icicles freeze.—  
That the grass is all hid 'long the side of the road  
Wher' the deep snow has drifted and shifted and blowed—  
And I feel in my life the same changes is there,—  
The frost in my heart, and the snow in my hair.

But, Muskingum Valley ! my memory sees  
Not the white on the ground, but the green in the trees—  
Not the froze'-over gorge, but the current, as clear  
And warm as the drop that has jes trickled here ;  
Not the choked-up ravine, and the hills topped with snow,  
But the grass and the blossoms I knowed long ago  
When my little bare feet wundered down wher' the stream  
In the Muskingum Valley flowed on like a dream.

## FOR THIS CHRISTMAS

YE old-time stave that peaeth out  
To Christmas revelers all,  
At tavern-tap and wassail bout,  
And in ye banquet hall.—  
Whiles ye old burden rings again,  
Add yet ye verse, as due:  
*“God bless you, merry gentlemen”—  
And gentlewomen, too!*

## A POOR MAN'S WEALTH

A POOR man? Yes, I must confess—  
No wealth of gold do I possess;  
No pastures fine, with grazing kine,  
Nor fields of waving grain are mine;  
No foot of fat or fallow land  
Where rightfully my feet may stand  
The while I claim it as my own—  
By deed and title, mine alone.

Ah, poor indeed! perhaps you say—  
But spare me your compassion, pray!—  
When I ride not—with you—I walk  
In Nature's company, and talk  
With one who will not slight or slur  
The child forever dear to her—  
And one who answers back, be sure,  
With smile for smile, though I am poor.

And while communing thus, I count  
An inner wealth of large amount,—  
The wealth of honest purpose blent  
With Penury's environment,—  
The wealth of owing naught to-day  
But debts that I would gladly pay,  
With wealth of thanks still unexpressed  
With cumulative interest.—

A wealth of patience and content—  
For all my ways improvident ;  
A faith still fondly exercised—  
For all my plans unrealized ;  
A wealth of promises that still,  
Howe'er I fail, I hope to fill ;  
A wealth of charity for those  
Who pity me my ragged clothes.

A poor man? Yes, I must confess—  
No wealth of gold do I possess ;  
No pastures fine, with grazing kine,  
Nor fields of waving grain are mine ;  
But ah, my friend ! I've wealth, no end !  
For millionaires might condescend  
To bend the knee and envy me  
This opulence of poverty.

## THE LITTLE RED RIBBON

THE little red ribbon, the ring and the rose!  
The summertime comes, and the summertime goes—  
And never a blossom in all of the land  
As white as the gleam of her beckoning hand!

The long winter months, and the glare of the snows;  
The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose!  
And never a glimmer of sun in the skies  
As bright as the light of her glorious eyes!

Dreams only are true; but they fade and are gone—  
For her face is not here when I waken at dawn;  
The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose  
*Mine* only; *hers* only the dream and repose.

I am weary of waiting, and weary of tears,  
And my heart wearies, too, all these desolate years,  
Moaning over the one only song that it knows,—  
The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose!

"HOW DID YOU REST, LAST NIGHT?"

"HOW did you rest, last night?"—

I've heard my gran'pap say  
Them words a thousand times—that's right—  
Jes them words thataway!  
As punctchul-like as morning dast  
To ever heave in sight  
Gran'pap 'ud allus haf to ast—  
"How did you rest, last night?"

Us young-uns used to grin,  
At breakfast, on the sly,  
And mock the wobble of his chin  
And eyebrows helt so high  
And kind: "*How did you rest, last night?*"  
We'd mumble and let on  
Our voices trimbled, and our sight  
Was dim, and hearin' gone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Bad as I used to be,  
All I'm a-wantin' is  
As puore and ca'm a sleep fer me  
And sweet a sleep as his!  
And so I pray, on Jedgegment Day  
To wake, and with its light  
See *his* face dawn, and hear him say—  
"How did you rest, last night?"

## A GOOD-BYE

“GOOD-BYE, my friend!”

He takes her hand—

The pressures blend:

They understand

But vaguely why, with drooping eye,

Each moans—“Good-bye!—Good-bye!”

“Dear friend, good-bye!”

O she could smile

If she might cry

A little while!—

She says, “I ought to smile—but I—

Forgive me—There!—Good-bye!”

“‘Good-bye?’ Ah, no:

I hate,” says he,

“These ‘good-byes’ so!”

“And I,” says she,

“Detest them so—why, I should *die*

Were this a *real* ‘good-bye!’”

## WHEN MAIMIE MARRIED

WHEN Maimie married Charley Brown,  
Joy took possession of the town ;  
The young folks swarmed in happy throngs—  
They rang the bells—they caroled songs—  
They carpeted the steps that led  
Into the church where they were wed ;  
And up and down the altar-stair  
They scattered roses everywhere ;  
When, in her orange-blossom crown,  
Queen Maimie married Charley Brown.

So beautiful she was, it seemed  
Men, looking on her, dreamed they dreamed ;  
And he, the holy man who took  
Her hand in his, so thrilled and shook,  
The gargoyles round the ceiling's rim  
Looked down and leered and grinned at him  
Until he half forgot his part  
Of sanctity, and felt his heart  
Beat worldward through his sacred gown—  
When Maimie married Charley Brown.

The bridesmaids kissed her, left and right—  
Fond mothers hugged her with delight—  
Young men of twenty-seven were seen  
To blush like lads of seventeen,

The while they held her hand to quote  
Such sentiments as poets wrote.—  
Yea, all the heads that Homage bends  
Were bowed to her—But O my friends,  
*My* hopes went up—*my* heart went down—  
When Maimie married—*Charley Brown!*

“THIS DEAR CHILD-HEARTED WOMAN THAT  
IS DEAD”

I

THIS woman, with the dear child-heart,  
Ye mourn as dead, is—where and what?  
With faith as artless as her Art,  
I question not,—

But dare divine, and feel, and know  
Her blessedness—as hath been writ  
In allegory.—Even so  
I fashion it:—

II

A stately figure, rapt and awed  
In her new guise of Angelhood,  
Still lingered, wistful—knowing God  
Was very good.—

Her thought’s fine whisper filled the pause;  
And, listening, the Master smiled,  
And lo! the stately angel was  
—A little child.

## TO A POET-CRITIC

YES,—the bee sings—I confess it—  
Sweet as honey—Heaven bless it!—  
Yit he'd be a *sweeter* singer  
Ef he didn't have no stinger.

---

AN OLD-TIMER

HERE where the wayward stream  
Is restful as a dream,  
    And where the banks o'erlook  
A pool from out whose deeps  
My pleased face upward peeps,  
    I cast my hook.

Silence and sunshine blent!—  
A Sabbath-like content  
    Of wood and wave ;—a free-  
Hand landscape grandly wrought  
Of Summer's brightest thought  
    And mastery.—

For here form, light and shade,  
And color—all are laid  
    With skill so rarely fine,  
The eye may even see  
The ripple tremblingly  
    Lip at the line.

I mark the dragonfly  
Flit waveringly by  
    In ever-veering flight,

Till, in a hush profound,  
I see him eddy round  
The "cork" and—'light!

Ho! with the boy's faith then  
Brimming my heart again,  
And knowing, soon or late,  
The "nibble" yet shall roll  
Its thrills along the pole,  
I—breathless—wait.

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THE SILENT VICTORS

MAY 30, 1878

*"Dying for victory, cheer on cheer  
Thundered on his eager ear."*

—CHARLES L. HOLSTEIN

I

DEEP, tender, firm and true, the Nation's heart  
Throbs for her gallant heroes passed away,  
Who in grim Battle's drama played their part,  
And slumber here today.—

Warm hearts that beat their lives out at the shrine  
Of Freedom, while our country held its breath  
As brave battalions wheeled themselves in line  
And marched upon their death:

When Freedom's Flag, its natal wounds scarce healed,  
Was torn from peaceful winds and flung again  
To shudder in the storm of battle-field—  
The elements of men,—

When every star that glittered was a mark  
For Treason's ball, and every rippling bar  
Of red and white was sullied with the dark  
And purple stain of war:

When angry guns, like famished beasts of prey,  
Were howling o'er their gory feast of lives,  
And sending dismal echoes far away  
To mothers, maids, and wives:—

The mother, kneeling in the empty night,  
With pleading hands uplifted for the son  
Who, even as she prayed, had fought the fight—  
The victory had won:

The wife, with trembling hand that wrote to say  
The babe was waiting for the sire's caress—  
The letter meeting that upon the way,—  
The babe was fatherless.

The maiden, with her lips, in fancy, pressed  
Against the brow once dewy with her breath,  
Now lying numb, unknown, and uncaressed  
Save by the dews of death:

## II

What meed of tribute can the poet pay  
The Soldier, but to trail the ivy-vine  
Of idle rhyme above his grave today  
In epitaph design?—

Or wreath with laurel-words the icy brows  
That ache no longer with a dream of fame,  
But, pillowed lowly in the narrow house,  
Renown'd beyond the name.

The dewy teardrops of the night may fall,  
And tender morning with her shining hand  
May brush them from the grasses green and tall  
That undulate the land.—

Yet song of Peace nor din of toil and thrift,  
Nor chanted honors, with the flowers we heap,  
Can yield us hope the Hero's head to lift  
Out of its dreamless sleep :

The dear old flag, whose faintest flutter flies  
A stirring echo through each patriot breast,  
Can never coax to life the folded eyes  
That saw its wrongs redressed—

That watched it waver when the fight was hot,  
And blazed with newer courage to its aid,  
Regardless of the shower of shell and shot  
Through which the charge was made ;—

And when, at last, they saw it plume its wings,  
Like some proud bird in stormy element,  
And soar untrammelled on its wanderings,  
They closed in death, content.

### III

O mother, you who miss the smiling face  
Of that dear boy who vanished from your sight,  
And left you weeping o'er the vacant place  
He used to fill at night,—

Who left you dazed, bewildered, on a day  
That echoed wild huzzas, and roar of guns  
That drowned the farewell words you tried to say  
To incoherent ones;—

Be glad and proud you had the life to give—  
Be comforted through all the years to come,—  
Your country has a longer life to live,  
Your son a better home.

O widow, weeping o'er the orphaned child,  
Who only lifts his questioning eyes to send  
A keener pang to grief unreconciled,—  
Teach him to comprehend

He had a father brave enough to stand  
Before the fire of Treason's blazing gun,  
That, dying, he might will the rich old land  
Of Freedom to his son.

And, maiden, living on through lonely years  
In fealty to love's enduring ties,—  
With strong faith gleaming through the tender tears  
That gather in your eyes,

Look up! and own, in gratefulness of prayer,  
Submission to the will of Heaven's High Host:—  
I see your Angel-soldier pacing there,  
Expectant at his post.—

I see the rank and file of armies vast,  
That muster under one supreme control;  
I hear the trumpet sound the signal-blast—  
The calling of the roll—

The grand divisions falling into line  
And forming, under voice of One alone  
Who gives command, and joins with tone divine  
The hymn that shakes the Throne.

## IV

And thus, in tribute to the forms that rest  
In their last camping-ground, we strew the bloom  
And fragrance of the flowers they loved the best,  
In silence o'er the tomb.

With reverent hands we twine the Hero's wreath  
And clasp it tenderly on stake or stone  
That stands the sentinel for each beneath  
Whose glory is our own.

While in the violet that greets the sun,  
We see the azure eye of some lost boy;  
And in the rose the ruddy cheek of one  
We kissed in childish joy,—

Recalling, haply, when he marched away,  
He laughed his loudest though his eyes were wet.—  
The kiss he gave his mother's brow that day  
Is there and burning yet:

And through the storm of grief around her tossed,  
One ray of saddest comfort she may see,—  
Four hundred thousand sons like hers were lost  
To weeping Liberty.

---

But draw aside the drapery of gloom,  
And let the sunshine chase the clouds away  
And gild with brighter glory every tomb  
We decorate today:

And in the holy silence reigning round,  
While prayers of perfume bless the atmosphere,  
Where loyal souls of love and faith are found,  
Thank God that Peace is here!

And let each angry impulse that may start,  
Be smothered out of every loyal breast;  
And, rocked within the cradle of the heart,  
Let every sorrow rest.

## UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

UP and down old Brandywine,  
In the days 'at's past and gone—  
With a dad-burn hook-and-line  
And a saplin'-pole—i swawn!  
I've had more fun, to the square  
Inch, than ever *anywhere*!  
Heaven to come can't discount mine  
Up and down old Brandywine!

Haint no sense in *wishin'*—yit  
Wisht to goodness I *could* jes  
“Gee” the blame world round and git  
Back to that old happiness!—  
Kindo' drive back in the shade  
“The old Covered Bridge” there laid  
'Crosst the crick, and sorto' soak  
My soul over, hub and spoke!

Honest, now!—it haint no *dream*  
'At I'm wantin',—but *the fac's*  
As they wuz; the same old stream,  
And the same old times, i jacks!—

Gim me back my bare feet—and  
 Stonebruise too!—And scratched and tanned!  
 And let hottest dog-days shine  
 Up and down old Brandywine!

In and on betwixt the trees  
 'Long the banks, pour down yer noon,  
 Kindo' curdled with the breeze  
 And the yallerhammer's tune;  
 And the smokin', chokin' dust  
 O' the turnpike at its wusst—  
*Saturd'ys*, say, when it seems  
 Road's jes jammed with country teams!—

Whilse the old town, fur away  
 'Crosst the hazy pastur'-land,  
 Dozed-like in the heat o' day  
 Peaceful' as a hired hand.  
 Jolt the gravel th'ough the floor  
 O' the old bridge!—grind and roar  
 With yer blame percession-line—  
 Up and down old Brandywine!

Souse me and my new straw-hat  
 Off the foot-log!—what *I* care?—  
 Fist shoved in the crown o' that—  
 Like the old Clown ust to wear.

Wouldn't swop it fer a' old  
Gin-u-wine raal crown o' gold!—  
Keep her *King* ef you'll gim me  
Jes the boy I ust to be!

Spill my fishin'-worms! er steal  
My best "goggle-eye!"—but you  
Can't lay hands on joys I feel  
Nibblin' like they ust to do!  
So, in memory, to-day  
Same old ripple lips away  
At my cork and saggin' line,  
Up and down old Brandywine!

There the logs is, round the hill,  
Where "Old Irvin" ust to lift  
Out sunfish from daylight till  
Dew-fall—'fore he'd leave "The Drift"  
And give *us* a chance—and then  
Kindo' fish back home again,  
Ketchin' 'em jes left and right  
Where *we* hadn't got "a bite!"

Er, 'way windin' out and in,—  
Old path th'ough the iurnweeds  
And dog-fennel to yer chin—  
Then come suddent, th'ough the reeds

And cat-tails, smack into where  
Them-air woods-hogs ust to scare  
Us clean 'crosst the County-line,  
Up and down old Brandywine!

But the dim roar o' the dam  
It 'ud coax us funder still  
Tords the old race, slow and ca'm,  
Slidin' on to Huston's mill—  
Where, I 'spect, "The Freeport crowd"  
Never *warmed* to us er 'lowed  
We wuz quite so overly  
Welcome as we aimed to be.

Still it peared-like ever'thing—  
Fur away from home as *there*—  
Had more *relish*-like, i jing!—  
Fish in stream, er bird in air!  
O them rich old bottom-lands,  
Past where Cowden's Schoolhouse stands!  
Wortermelons—*master-mine*!  
Up and down old Brandywine!

And sich pop-paws!—Lumps o' raw  
Gold and green,—jes oozy th'ough  
With ripe yaller—like you've saw  
Custard-pie with no crust to:

And jes *gorges* o' wild plums,  
Till a feller'd suck his thumbs  
Clean up to his elbows! *My!*—  
*Me some more er lem me die!*

Up and down old Brandywine! . . . .

Stripe me with pokeberry-juice!—

Flick me with a pizenvine

And yell "*Yip!*" and lem me loose!

—Old now as I then wuz young,

'F I could sing as I *have* sung,

Song 'ud surely ring *dee-vine*

Up and down old Brandywine!

## THREE SINGING FRIENDS

## I

LEE O. HARRIS

SCHOOLMASTER and Songmaster! Memory  
Enshrines thee with an equal love, for thy  
Duality of gifts,—thy pure and high  
Endowments—Learning rare, and Poesy  
These were as mutual handmaids, serving thee,  
Throughout all seasons of the years gone by,  
With all enduring joys 'twixt earth and sky—  
In turn shared nobly with thy friends and me.  
Thus is it that thy clear song, ringing on,  
Is endless inspiration, fresh and free  
As the old Mays at verge of June sunshine.  
And musical as then, at dewy dawn,  
The robin hailed us, and all twinklingly  
Our one path wandered under wood and vine.

## II

BENJ. S. PARKER

Thy rapt song makes of Earth a realm of light  
And shadow mystical as some dreamland  
Arched with unfathomed azure—vast and grand  
With splendor of the morn; or dazzling bright

With orient noon ; or strewn with stars of night  
Thick as the daisies blown in grasses fanned  
By odorous midsummer breezes and  
Showered over by all bird-songs exquisite.  
This is thy voice's beatific art—  
To make melodious all things below,  
Calling through them, from far, diviner space,  
Thy clearer hail to us.—The faltering heart  
Thou cheerest ; and thy fellow mortal so  
Fares onward under Heaven with lifted face.

## III

## JAMES NEWTON MATTHEWS

Bard of our Western world !—its prairies wide,  
With edging woods, lost creeks and hidden ways ;  
Its isolated farms, with roundelays  
Of orchard warblers heard on every side ;  
Its crossroad schoolhouse, wherein still abide  
Thy fondest memories,—since there thy gaze  
First fell on classic verse ; and thou, in praise  
Of that, didst find thine own song glorified.  
So singing, smite the strings and counterchange  
The lucently melodious drippings of  
Thy happy harp, from airs of " *Tempe Vale*,"  
To chirp and trill of lowliest flight and range,  
In praise of our Today and home and love—  
Thou meadowlark no less than nightingale.

## A NOON LULL

'POSSUM in de 'tater-patch;  
Chicken-hawk a-hangin'  
Stiddy 'bove de stable-lot,  
An' cyarpet-loom a-bangin'!  
Hi! Mr. Hoppergrass, chawin' yo' terbacker,  
Flick ye wid er buggy-whirp yer spit er little blacker!

Niggah in de roas'in'-yeers,  
Whiskers in de shuckin';  
Weasel croppin' mighty shy,  
But ole hen a-cluckin'!  
—What's got de matter er de mule-colt now?  
Drapt in de turnip-hole, chasin' f'um de cow!

## A WINDY DAY

THE dawn was a dawn of splendor,  
And the blue of the morning skies  
Was as placid and deep and tender  
As the blue of a baby's eyes;  
The sunshine flooded the mountain,  
And flashed over land and sea  
Like the spray of a glittering fountain.—  
But the wind—the wind—Ah me!

Like a weird invisible spirit,  
It swooped in its airy flight;  
And the earth, as the stress drew near it,  
Quailed as in mute affright;  
The grass in the green fields quivered—  
The waves of the smitten brook  
Chillily shuddered and shivered,  
And the reeds bowed down and shook.

Like a sorrowful miserere  
It sobbed and it wailed and blew  
Till the leaves on the trees looked weary,  
And my prayers were weary, too;  
And then, like the sunshine's glimmer  
That failed in the awful strain,  
All the hope of my eyes grew dimmer  
In a spatter of spiteful rain.

## MY HENRY

HE'S jes' a great, big, awk'ard, hulkin'  
 Feller,—humped, and sorto' sulkin'-  
 Like, and ruther still-appearin'—  
 Kind-as-ef he wuzn't keerin'

Whether school holt out er not—  
 That's my Henry, to a dot!

Allus kindo' liked him—whether  
 Childern, er growed-up together!  
 Fifteen year' ago and better,  
 'Fore he ever knowed a letter,  
 Run acrosst the little fool  
 In my Primer-class at school.

When the Teacher wuzn't lookin',  
 He'd be th'owin' wads; er crookin'  
 Pins; er sprinklin' pepper, more'n  
 Likely, on the stove; er borin'  
 Gimblet-holes up thue his desk—  
 Nothin' *that* boy wouldn't resk!

But, somehow, as I was goin'  
 On to say, he seemed so knowin',  
*Other* ways, and cute and cunnin'—  
 Allus wuz a notion runnin'  
 Thue my giddy, fool-head he  
 Jes' had ben cut out fer me!

Don't go much on *propbesyin'*,  
But last night whilse I wuz fryin'  
Supper, with that man a-pitchin'  
Little Marthy 'round the kitchen,  
    Think-says-I, "Them baby's eyes  
    Is my Henry's, jes' p'cise!"

## THE SONG I NEVER SING

AS when in dreams we sometimes hear  
A melody so faint and fine  
And musically sweet and clear,  
It flavors all the atmosphere  
With harmony divine,—  
So, often in my waking dreams,  
I hear a melody that seems  
Like fairy voices whispering  
To me the song I never sing.

Sometimes when brooding o'er the years  
My lavish youth has thrown away—  
When all the glowing past appears  
But as a mirage that my tears  
Have crumbled to decay,—  
I thrill to find the ache and pain  
Of my remorse is stilled again,  
As, forward bent and listening,  
I hear the song I never sing.

A murmuring of rhythmic words,  
Adrift on tunes whose currents flow  
Melodious with the trill of birds,  
And far-off lowing of the herds  
In lands of long-ago ;

And every sound the truant loves  
Comes to me like the coo of doves  
When first in blooming fields of Spring  
I heard the song I never sing.

The echoes of old voices, wound  
In limpid streams of laughter where  
The river Time runs bubble-crowned,  
And giddy eddies ripple round  
The lilies growing there;  
Where roses, bending o'er the brink,  
Drain their own kisses as they drink,  
And ivies climb and twine and cling  
About the song I never sing.

An ocean-surge of sound that falls  
As though a tide of Heavenly art  
Had tempested the gleaming halls  
And crested o'er the golden walls  
In showers on my heart....  
Thus—thus, with open arms and eyes  
Uplifted toward the alien skies,  
Forgetting every earthly thing,  
I hear the song I never sing.

O nameless lay, sing clear and strong,  
Pour down thy melody divine  
Till purifying floods of song  
Have washed away the stains of wrong  
That dim this soul of mine!

O woo me near and nearer thee,  
Till my glad lips may catch the key,  
And, with a voice unwavering,  
Join in the song I never sing.

## TO EDGAR WILSON NYE

O "WILLIAM,"—in thy blithe companionship  
What liberty is mine—what sweet release  
From clamorous strife, and yet what boisterous peace!  
Ho! ho! it is thy fancy's finger-tip  
That dints the dimple now, and kinks the lip  
That scarce may sing, in all this glad increase  
Of merriment! So, pray-thee, do not cease  
To cheer me thus;—for, underneath the quip  
Of thy droll sorcery, the wrangling fret  
Of all distress is stilled—no syllable  
Of sorrow vexeth me—no teardrops wet  
My teeming lids save those that leap to tell  
Thee thou 'st a guest that overweepeth, yet  
Only because thou jokest overwell.

## LITTLE DAVID

THE mother of the little boy that sleeps  
Has blest assurance, even as she weeps :  
She knows her little boy has now no pain—  
No further ache, in body, heart or brain ;  
All sorrow is lulled for him—all distress  
Passed into utter peace and restfulness.—  
All health that heretofore has been denied—  
All happiness, all hope, and all beside  
Of childish longing, now he clasps and keeps  
In voiceless joy—the little boy that sleeps.

## OUT OF THE HITHERWHERE

OUT of the hitherwhere into the YON—  
The land that the Lord's love rests upon ;  
Where one may rely on the friends he meets,  
And the smiles that greet him along the streets :  
Where the mother that left you years ago  
Will lift the hands that were folded so,  
And put them about you, with all the love  
And tenderness you are dreaming of.

Out of the hitherwhere into the YON—  
Where all of the friends of your youth have gone,—  
Where the old schoolmate that laughed with you,  
Will laugh again as he used to do,  
Running to meet you, with such a face  
As lights like a moon the wondrous place  
Where God is living, and glad to live,  
Since He is the Master and may forgive.

Out of the hitherwhere into the YON !—  
Stay the hopes we are leaning on —  
You, Divine, with Your merciful eyes  
Looking down from the far-away skies,—  
Smile upon us, and reach and take  
Our worn souls Home for the old home's sake.—  
And so Amen,—for our all seems gone  
Out of the hitherwhere into the YON.

## RABBIT IN THE CROSS-TIES

RABBIT in the cross-ties.—

Punch him out—quick!

Git a twister on him

With a long prong stick.

Watch him on the south side—

Watch him on the—Hi!—

There he goes! Sic him, Tige!

Yi! Yi!! Yi!!!

## SERENADE—TO NORA

THE moonlight is fallin'—  
The sad stars are palin'—  
The black wings av night are a-droopin' an' trailin';  
The wind's miserere  
Sounds lonesome an' dreary;  
The katydid's dumb an' the nightingale's weary.

Troth, Nora! I'm wadin'  
The grass an' paradin'  
The dews at your dure, wid my swate serenadin',  
Alone and forsaken,  
Whilst you're never wakin'  
To tell me you're wid me an' I am mistaken!

Don't think that my singin'  
Its wrong to be flingin'  
Forninst av the dreams that the Angels are bringin';  
For if your pure spirit  
Might waken and hear it,  
You'd never be draamin' the Saints could come near it!

Then lave off your slaapin'—  
The pulse av me's laapin'  
To have the two eyes av yez down on me paapin'.  
Och, Nora! Its hopin'  
Your windy ye'll open  
And light up the night were the heart av me's gropin'.

## HE AND I

JUST drifting on together—  
    He and I—  
As through the balmy weather  
    Of July  
    Drift two thistle-tufts imbedded  
    Each in each—by zephyrs wedded—  
    Touring upward, giddy-headed,  
    For the sky.

And, veering up and onward,  
    Do we seem  
Forever drifting downward  
    In a dream,  
    Where we meet song-birds that know us,  
    And the winds their kisses blow us,  
    While the years flow far below us  
    Like a stream.

And we are happy—very—  
    He and I—  
Aye, even glad and merry  
    Though on high  
    The heavens are sometimes shrouded  
    By the midnight storm, and clouded  
    Till the pallid moon is crowded  
    From the sky.

My spirit ne'er expresses  
    Any choice  
But to clothe him with caresses  
    And rejoice ;  
And as he laughs, it is in  
Such a tone the moonbeams glisten  
And the stars come out to listen  
    To his voice.

And so, whate'er the weather,  
    He and I,—  
With our lives linked thus together,  
    Float and fly  
As two thistle-tufts imbedded  
Each in each—by zephyrs wedded—  
Touring upward, giddy-headed,  
    For the sky.

## WHAT REDRESS

I PRAY you, do not use this thing  
For vengeance; but if questioning  
What wound, when dealt your humankind,  
Goes deepest,—surely he will find  
Who wrongs *you*, loving *him* no less—  
There's nothing hurts like tenderness.

## DREAMER, SAY

DREAMER, say, will you dream for me  
A wild sweet dream of a foreign land,  
Whose border sips of a foaming sea  
With lips of coral and silver sand;  
Where warm winds loll on the shady deeps,  
Or lave themselves in the tearful mist  
The great wild wave of the breaker weeps  
O'er crags of opal and amethyst?

Dreamer, say, will you dream a dream  
Of tropic shades in the lands of shine,  
Where the lily leans o'er an amber stream  
That flows like a rill of wasted wine,—  
Where the palm-trees, lifting their shields of green,  
Parry the shafts of the Indian sun  
Whose splintering vengeance falls between  
The reeds below where the waters run?

Dreamer, say, will you dream of love  
That lives in a land of sweet perfume,  
Where the stars drip down from the skies above  
In molten spatters of bud and bloom?  
Where never the weary eyes are wet,  
And never a sob in the balmy air,  
And only the laugh of the paroquette  
Breaks the sleep of the silence there?

WHEN LIDE MARRIED *HIM*

WHEN Lide married *him*—w’y, she had to jes dee-fy  
 The whole popilation!—But she never bat’ an eye!  
 Her parents. begged, and *threatened*—she must give him  
 up—that *he*

Wuz jes “a common drunkard!”—And he *wuz*, ap-  
 pearantly.—

Swore they’d chase him off the place

Ef he ever showed his face—

Long after she’d *eloped* with him and *married* him fer  
 shore!—

When Lide married *him*, it wuz “*Katy, bar the door!*”

When Lide married *him*—Well! she had to go and be  
 A *hired girl* in town somewheres—while he tromped  
 round to see

What *he* could git that *he* could do,—you might say,  
 jes sawed wood

From door-to-door!—that’s what he done—’cause that  
 wuz best he could!

And the strangest thing, i jing!

Wuz, he didn’t *drink* a thing,—

But jes got down to bizness, like he someway *wanted* to,  
 When Lide married him, like they warned her *not* to do!

---

When Lide married *him*—er, ruther, *had* ben married  
A little up'ards of a year—some feller come and carried  
That *hired girl* away with him—a ruther *stylish* feller  
In a bran-new green spring-wagon, with the wheels  
striped red and yellor:

And he whispered, as they driv

Tords the country, “*Now we’ll live!*”—

And *somepin’ else* she *laughed* to hear, though both her  
eyes wuz dim,

’Bout “*trustin’ Love and Heav’n above*, sence Lide mar-  
ried *him!*”

## MY BRIDE THAT IS TO BE

O SOUL of mine, look out and see  
My bride, my bride that is to be!—

Reach out with mad, impatient hands,  
And draw aside futurity  
As one might draw a veil aside—

And so unveil her where she stands  
Madonna-like and glorified—

The queen of undiscovered lands  
Of love, to where she beckons me—  
My bride—my bride that is to be.  
The shadow of a willow-tree

That wavers on a garden-wall  
In summertime may never fall  
In attitude as gracefully  
As my fair bride that is to be;—

Nor ever Autumn's leaves of brown  
As lightly flutter to the lawn  
As fall her fairy-feet upon

The path of love she loiters down.—  
O'er drops of dew she walks, and yet  
Not one may stain her sandal wet—  
Aye, she might *dance* upon the way  
Nor crush a single drop to spray,  
So airy-like she seems to me,—  
My bride, my bride that is to be.

---

I know not if her eyes are light  
As summer-skies or dark as night,—  
I only know that they are dim  
    With mystery: In vain I peer  
    To make their hidden meaning clear,  
    While o'er their surface, like a tear  
That ripples to the silken brim,  
A look of longing seems to swim  
    All worn and wearylike to me;  
And then, as suddenly, my sight  
Is blinded with a smile so bright,  
    Through folded lids I still may see  
    My bride, my bride that is to be.  
Her face is like a night of June  
Upon whose brow the crescent-moon  
Hangs pendant in a diadem  
Of stars, with envy lighting them.—  
    And, like a wild cascade, her hair  
Floods neck and shoulder, arm and wrist,  
Till only through a gleaming mist  
    I seem to see a siren there,  
With lips of love and melody  
    And open arms and heaving breast  
    Wherein I fling myself to rest,  
The while my heart cries hopelessly  
For my fair bride that is to be....

Nay, foolish heart and blinded eyes!  
My bride hath need of no disguise.—  
But, rather, let her come to me  
In such a form as bent above  
My pillow when, in infancy,  
I knew not anything but love.—  
O let her come from out the lands  
Of Womanhood—not fairy isles,—  
And let her come with Woman's hands  
And Woman's eyes of tears and smiles,—  
With Woman's hopefulness and grace  
Of patience lighting up her face:  
And let her diadem be wrought  
Of kindly deed and prayerful thought,  
That ever over all distress  
May beam the light of cheerfulness.—  
And let her feet be brave to fare  
The labyrinths of doubt and care,  
That, following, my own may find  
The path to Heaven God designed.—  
O let her come like this to me—  
My bride—my bride that is to be.

“RINGWORM FRANK”

JEST Frank Reed 's his *real* name—though  
Boys all calls him “Ringworm Frank,”  
'Cause he allus *runs round* so.—  
No man can't tell where to bank  
    *Frank* 'll be,  
    Next you see  
Er *hear* of him!—Drat his melts!—  
That man's allus *somers else!*

We're old pards.—But Frank he jest  
    *Can't* stay still!—Wuz *prosper'n'* here,  
But lit out on funder West  
    Somers on a ranch, last year:  
    Never heard  
    Nary a word  
    *How* he liked it, tel to-day,  
Got this card, reads thisaway:—

“Dad-burn climate out here makes  
    Me homesick all Winter long,  
And when Springtime *comes*, it takes  
    Two pee-wees to sing one song,—  
    One sings ‘*pee,*’  
    And the other one ‘*wee!*’  
Stay right where you air, old pard.—  
Wisht *I* wuz this postal-card!”

## AN EMPTY GLOVE

## I

AN empty glove—long withering in the grasp  
Of Time's cold palm. I lift it to my lips—  
And lo, once more I thrill beneath its clasp,  
In fancy, as with odorous finger-tips  
It reaches from the years that used to be  
And proffers back love, life and all, to me.

## II

Ah! beautiful she was beyond belief:  
Her face was fair and lustrous as the moon's;  
Her eyes—too large for small delight or grief,—  
The smiles of them were Laughter's afternoons;  
Their tears were April showers, and their love—  
All sweetest speech swoons ere it speaks thereof.

## III

White-fruited cocoa shown against the shell  
Were not so white as was her brow below  
The cloven tresses of the hair that fell  
Across her neck and shoulders of nude snow;  
Her cheeks—chaste pallor, with a crimson stain—  
Her mouth was like a red rose rinsed with rain.

## IV

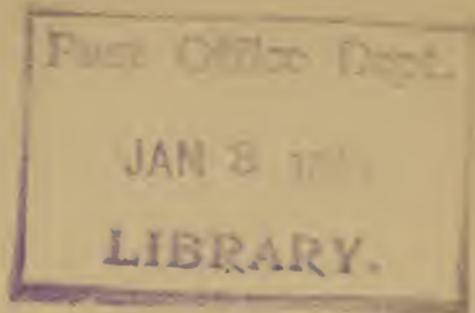
And this was she my fancy held as good—  
As fair and lovable—in every wise  
As peerless in pure worth of womanhood  
As was her wondrous beauty in men's eyes.—  
Yet, all alone, I kiss this empty glove—  
The poor husk of the hand I loved—and love.

## OUR OWN

THEY walk here with us, hand-in-hand ;  
We gossip, knee-by-knee ;  
They tell us all that they have planned—  
Of all their joys to be,—  
And, laughing, leave us : And, to-day,  
All desolate we cry  
Across wide waves of voiceless graves—  
Good-bye ! Good-bye ! Good-bye !







MAKE-BELIEVE  
AND CHILD-PLAY



## THE FROG

*WHO am I but the Frog—the Frog!  
My realm is the dark bayou,  
And my throne is the muddy and moss-grown log  
That the poison-vine clings to—  
And the blacksnakes slide in the slimy tide  
Where the ghost of the moon looks blue.*

*What am I but a King—a King!—  
For the royal robes I wear—  
A sceptre, too, and a signet-ring,  
As vassals and serfs declare :  
And a voice, god wot, that is equaled not  
In the wide world anywhere!*

*I can talk to the Night—the Night!—  
Under her big black wing  
She tells me the tale of the world outright,  
And the secret of everything ;  
For she knows you all, from the time you crawl,  
To the doom that death will bring.*

*The Storm swoops down, and he blows—and blows,—  
While I drum on his swollen cheek,  
And croak in his angered eye that glows*

*With the lurid lightning's streak ;  
While the rushes drown in the watery frown  
That his bursting passions leak.*

*And I can see through the sky—the sky—  
As clear as a piece of glass ;  
And I can tell you the how and why  
Of the things that come to pass—  
And whether the dead are there instead,  
Or under the graveyard grass.*

*To your Sovereign lord all hail—all hail!—  
To your Prince on his throne so grim!  
Let the moon swing low, and the high stars trail  
Their heads in the dust to him ;  
And the wide world sing : Long live the King,  
And grace to his royal whim !*

## “TWIGGS AND TUDENS”

IF my old school-chum and room-mate John Skinner is alive to-day—and no doubt he *is* alive, and quite so, being, when last heard from, the very alert and effective Train Dispatcher at Butler, Ind.,—he will not have forgotten a certain night in early June (the 8th) of 1870, in “Old Number ’Leven” of the Dunbar House, Greenfield, when he and I sat the long night through, getting ready a famous issue of our old school-paper, “*The Criterion.*” And he will remember, too, the queer old man who occupied, but that one night, the room just opposite our own, number 13. For reasons wholly aside from any superstitious dread connected with the numerals, 13 was not a desirable room; its locality was alien to all accommodations, and its comforts, like its furnishings, were extremely meager. In fact, it was the room usually assigned to the tramp-printer, who, in those days, was an institution; or again, it was the local habitation of the oft-recurring transient customer who was too incapacitated to select a room himself when he retired—or rather, when he was personally retired by “the hostler,” as the gentlemanly night-clerk of that era was habitually designated.

As both Skinner and myself—between fitful terms of school—had respectively served as “printer’s devil” in

the two rival newspaper offices of the town, it was natural for us to find a ready interest in anything pertaining to the newspaper business; and so it was, perhaps, that we had been selected, by our own approval and that of our fellow-students of The Graded Schools, to fill the rather exalted office of editing "*The Criterion*." Certain it is, that the rather abrupt rise from the lowly duties of the "roller" to the editorial management of a paper of our own (even if issued in hand-writing) we accepted as a natural right; and, vested in our new power of office, we were largely "shaping the whisper of the throne" about our way.

And upon this particular evening it was, as John and I had fairly squared ourselves for the work of the night, that we heard the clatter and shuffle of feet on the side-stairs, and, an instant later, the hostler establishing some poor unfortunate in 13, just across the hall.

"Listen!" said John, as we heard an old man's voice through the open transom of our door,—“Listen at that!”

It was an utterance peculiarly refined, in language as well as intonation. A low, mild, rather apologetic voice, gently assuring the hostler that "everything was very snug and comfortable indeed," so far as the "compartment" was concerned—but would not the "attendant" kindly supply a better light, together with pen-and-ink—and just a sheet or two of paper,—if he would be so

very good as to find a pardon for so very troublesome a guest.”

“Haint no writin’-paper,” said the hostler, briefly,—“and the big lamps is all in use. These fellers here in ’Leven might let you have some paper and—Haint *you* got a lead-pencil?”

“Oh, no matter!” came the impatient yet kindly answer of the old voice—“no matter at all, my good fellow!—Good-night—good-night!”

We waited till the sullen, clumpy footsteps down the hall and stair had died away.

Then Skinner, with a handful of foolscap, opened our door; and, with an indorsing smile from me, crossed the hall and tapped at 13—was admitted—entered, and very quietly closed the door behind him, evidently that I might not be disturbed.

I wrote on in silence for quite a time. It was, in fact, a full half-hour before John had returned,—and with a face and eye absolutely blazing with delight.

“An old printer,” whispered John, answering my look,—“and we’re in luck:—He’s a *genius*, ’y God! and an Englishman, and knows Dickens *personally*—used to write races with him, and’s got a manuscript of his in his “portmanteau,” as he calls an old oil-cloth knapsack with one lung clean gone. Excuse this extra light.—Old man’s lamp’s like a sore eye, and he’s going to touch up the Dickens’ sketch for *us*! *Hear?*—

For us—for '*The Criterion*.' Says he can't sleep—he's in distress—has a presentiment—some dear friend is dying—or dead now—and he must write—*write!*'"

This is, in briefest outline, the curious history of the subjoined sketch, especially curious for the reason that the following morning's cablegram announced that the great novelist, Charles Dickens, had been stricken suddenly and seriously the night previous. On the day of this announcement—even as "*The Criterion*" was being read to perfunctorily-interested visitors of The Greenfield Graded Schools—came the further announcement of Mr. Dickens' death. The old printer's manuscript, here reproduced, is, as originally, captioned—

#### TWIGGS AND TUDENS

"Now who'd want a more cozier little home than me and Tude's got here?" asked Mr. Twiggs, as his twinkling eyes swept caressingly around the cheery little room in which he, alone, stood one chill December evening as the great St. Paul's was drawling six.

"This aint no princely hall with all its gorgeous paraphanaly, as the play-bills says; but it's what I calls a 'interior,' which for meller comfort and cheerful surroundin's, aint to be ekalled by no other 'flat' on the boundless, never-endin' stage of this existence!" And as the exuberant Mr. Twiggs rendered this observation, he felt called upon to smile and bow most graciously to

an invisible audience, whose wild approval he in turn interpreted by an enthusiastic clapping of his hands and the cry of “ongcore!” in a dozen different keys—this strange acclamation being made the more grotesque by a great green parrot perched upon the mantel, which in a voice less musical than penetrating, chimed in with “Hooray for Twiggs and Tudens!” a very great number of times.

“Tude’s a queer girl,” said Mr. Twiggs, subsiding into a reflective calm, broken only by the puffing of his pipe, and the occasional articulation of a thought, as it loitered through his mind. “Tude’s a queer girl!—a werry queer girl!” repeated Mr. Twiggs, pausing again, with a long whiff at his pipe, and marking the graceful swoop the smoke made as it dipped and disappeared up the wide, black-throated chimney; and then, as though dropping into confidence with the great fat kettle on the coals, that steamed and bubbled with some inner paroxysm, he added, “And queer and nothink short, is the lines for Tude, eh?”

“Now s’posin’,” he continued, leaning forward and speaking in a tone whose careful intonation might have suggested a more than ordinary depth of wisdom and sagacity,—“S’posin’ a pore chap like me, as aint no property only this ’ere ‘little crooked house’, as Tude calls it, and some o’ the properties I ’andles at the Drury—as I was a-sayin’,—s’posin’ now a old rough chap like

me was jest to tell her all about herself, and who she is and all, and not no kith or kin o' mine, let alone a daughter, as *she* thinks—What do you reckon now 'ud be the upshot, eh?" And as Mr. Twiggs propounded this mysterious query he jabbed the poker prankishly in the short-ribs of the grate, at which the pot, as though humoring a joke it failed to wholly comprehend, set up a chuckling of such asthmatic violence its smothered cachinations tilted its copper lid till Mr. Twiggs was obliged to dash a cup of water in its face.

"And Tude's a-comin of a age, too," continued Mr. Twiggs, "when a more tenderer pertecter than a father, so to speak, wouldn't be out o' keepin' with the nat'ral order o' things, seein' as how she's sort o' startin' for herself-like now. And its a question in my mind, if it ain't my bounden duty as her father—or ruther, who has been a father to her all her life—to kind o' tell her jest how things is, and all—and how *I* am, and every-think,—and how I feel as though I ort o' stand by her, as I allus have, and allus *have* had her welfare in view, and kind o' feel as how I allus—ort o' kind o'—ort o' kind o'"—and here Mr. Twiggs' voice fell into silence so abruptly that the drowsy parrot started from its trance-like quiet and cried "Ortokindo! ortokindo!" with such a strength of seeming mockery that he was brushed violently to the floor by the angry hand of Mr. Twiggs and went backing awkwardly beneath the table.

“Blow me,” said Mr. Twiggs, “if the knowin’ impidence of that ’ere bird aint astonishin’!” And then, after a serious controversy with the draft of his pipe, he went on with his deliberations.

“Lor! it were jest scrumptious to see Tude in ‘The Iron Chest’ last night! Now, I aint no actur myself,—I’ve been on, of course, a thousand times as ‘fillin’,’ ‘sogers’ and ‘peasants’ and the like, where I never had no lines, on’y in the ‘choruses;’ but if I don’t know nothin’ but ‘All hail!—All hail!’ I’ve had the experience of bein’ under the baleful hinfluence of the hopper-glass, and I’m free to say it air a ticklish position and no mistake. But *Tude!* w’y, bless you, she warn’t the first bit flustered, was she? ’Peared like she jest felt perfectly at home-like—like her mother afore her! And I’m dashed if I didn’t feel the cold chills a-creepin’ and a-crawlin’ when she was a-singin’ ‘Down by the river there grows a green willer and a-weepin’ all night with the bank for her piller;’ and when she come to the part about wantin’ to be buried there ‘while the winds was a-blowin’ close by the stream where her tears was a-flowin’, and over her corpse to keep the green willers growin’, I’m d—d if I didn’t blubber right out!” And as the highly sympathetic Mr. Twiggs delivered this acknowledgment, he stroked the inner corners of his eyes, and rubbed his thumb and finger on his trowsers.

“It were a tryin’ thing, though,” he went on, his

mellow features settling into a look not at all in keeping with his shiny complexion, "it were a tryin' thing, and it *air* a tryin' thing to see them lovely arms o' hern a-twinin' so lovin'-like around that 'ere Stanley's neck and a-kissin' of him—as she's obleeged to do, of course—as the 'properties' of the play demands; but I'm blowed if she wouldn't do it quite so nat'ral-like I'd feel easier. Blow me!" he broke off savagely, starting up and flinging his pipe in the ashes, "I'm about a-comin' to the conclusion I aint got no more courage'n a blasted school-boy! Here I am old enough to be her father—mighty nigh it—and yet I'm actually afear'd to speak up and tell her jest how things is, and all, and how I feel like I—like I—ort o'—ort o'"—

"*Ortokindo! Ortokindo!*" shrieked the parrot, clinging in a reversed position to the under-round of a chair.—"Ortokindo! Ortokindo! Tude's come home!—Tude's come home!" And as though in happy proof of this latter assertion, the gentle Mr. Twiggs found his chubby neck encircled by a pair of rosy arms, and felt upon his cheek the sudden pressure of a pair of lips that thrilled his old heart to the core. And then the noisy bird dropped from his perch and marched pompously from its place of concealment, trailing its rusty wings and shrieking, "Tude's come home!" at the top of its brazen voice.

"Shet up!" screamed Mr. Twiggs, with a pretended

gust of rage, kicking lamely at the feathered oracle; “I’ll ‘Tude’s-come-home’ ye! W’y, a feller can’t hear his *ears* for your infernal squawkin’!” And then, turning toward the serious eyes that peered rebukingly into his own, his voice fell gentle as a woman’s: “Well, there, Tudens, I beg parding; I do indeed. Don’t look at me thataway. I know I’m a great, rough, good-for—” But a warm, swift kiss cut short the utterance; and, as the girl drew back, still holding the bright old face between her tender palms, he said simply, “You’re a queer girl, Tudens; a queer girl.”

“Ha! am I?” said the girl, in quite evident heroics and quotation, starting back with a theatrical flourish and falling into a fantastic attitude.—“‘Troth, I am sorry for it; me poor father’s heart is bursting with gratichude, and he would fain ease it by pouring out his thanks to his benefactor.’”

“Werry good! Werry good, indeed!” said Mr. Twiggs, gazing wistfully upon the graceful figure of the girl. “You’re a-growin’ more wonderful’ clever in your ‘presence’ every day, Tude. You don’t think o’ nothink else but your actin,’ do ye now?” And, as Mr. Twiggs concluded this observation, a something very like a sigh came faltering from his lips.

“Why, listen there! Ah-ha!” laughed Tude, clapping her hands and dancing gaily around his chair.—“Why, you old melancholy Dane, you! are you actually *sighing*?” Then, dropping into a tragic air of deep con-

trition, she continued: "But, believe me, I would not question you, but to console you, Wilford. I would scorn to pry into any one's grief, much more yours, Wilford, to satisfy a busy curiosity."

"Oh, don't Tude; don't *rehearse* like that at me!—I can't a-bear it." And the serious Mr. Twiggs held out his hand as though warding off a blow. At this appeal the girl's demeanor changed to one of tenderest solicitude.

"Why, Pop'm," she said, laying her hand on his shoulder, "I did not mean to vex you—forgive me. I was only trying to be happy, as I ought, although my own heart is this very minute heavy—very heavy—very.—No, no; I don't mean that—but, Father, Father, I have not been dutiful."

"W'y, yes you have," broke in Mr. Twiggs, smothering the heavy exclamation in his handkerchief. "You ain't been ondutiful, nor nothink else. You're jest all and everythink that heart could wish. It's all my own fault, Tudens; it's all my fault. You see, I git to thinkin' sometimes like I was a-goin' to lose you; and now that you are a-comin' on in years, and gittin' such a fine start, and all, and position and everythink.—Yes-sir! *position*, 'cause everybody likes you, Tudens. You know that; and I'm that proud of you and all, and that selfish, that it's onpossible I could ever, ever give you up;—never, never, *ever* give you up!" And Mr. Twiggs

again stifled his voice in his handkerchief and blew his nose with prolonged violence.

It may have been the melancholy ticking of the clock, as it grated on the silence following, it may have been the gathering darkness of the room, or the plaintive sighing of the rising wind without, that caused the girl to shudder as she stooped to kiss the kind old face bent forward in the shadows, and turned with feigned gayety to the simple task of arranging supper. But when, a few minutes later, she announced that Twiggs and Tudens' tea was waiting, the two smilingly sat down, Mr. Twiggs remarking, that if he only knew a blessing, he'd ask it upon that occasion most certainly.

“—For only look at these-'ere 'am and eggs,” he said, admiringly: “I'd like to know if the Queen herself could cook 'em to a nicer turn, or serve 'em up more tantalizin'er to the palate. And this-'ere soup,—or whatever it is, is rich as gravy; and these boughten rolls ain't a bad thing either, split in two and toasted as you do 'em, air they, Tude?” And as Mr. Twiggs glanced inquiringly at his companion, he found her staring vacantly at her plate. “I was jest a-sayin', Tudens—” he went on, pretending to blow his tea and glancing cautiously across his saucer.

“Yes, Pop'm, I heard you;—we really *ought* to have a blessing, by all means.”

Mr. Twiggs put down his tea without tasting it.

"Tudens," he said, after a long pause, in which he carefully buttered a piece of toast for the second time,—  
"Tudens, I'm 'most afeared you didn't grasp that last remark of mine: I was a-sayin'—"

"Well—"said Tudens, attentively.

"I was a-sayin'," said Mr. Twiggs, averting his face and staring stoically at his toast; "I was a-sayin' that you was a-gittin' now to be quite a young woman."

"Oh, so you were," said Tudens, with charming naivete.

"Well," said Mr. Twiggs, repentantly, but with a humorous twinkle, "if I wasn't a-sayin' of it, I was *a-thinkin'* it."—And then, running along hurriedly, "and I've been a-thinkin' it for days and days—ever sence you left the 'balley' and went in 'chambermaids,' and last in leadin' roles. Maybe *you* ain't noticed it, but I've had my eyes on you from the 'flies' and the 'wings;' and jest betwixt us, Tudens, and not for me as ort to know better, and does know better, to go a-flatterin', at my time o'—or to go a-flatterin' anybody, as I said, after you're a-gittin' to be a young woman—and what's more, a werry '*andsome* young woman!"

"*Why, Pop'm!*" exclaimed Tudens, blushing.

"Yes you are, Tudens, and I mean it, every word of it; and as I was a-goin' on to say, I've been a-watchin' of you, and a-layin' off a long time jest to tell you summat that will make your eyes open wider 'an that! What

I mean,” said Mr. Twiggs, coughing vehemently and pushing his chair back from the table, “what I mean is, you’ll soon be old enough to be a-settin’ up for your-self-like, and marry’—W’y, Tudens, what *ails* you?” The girl had risen to her feet, and, with a face dead white and lips all tremulous, stood clinging to her chair for support. “What ails you, Tudens?” repeated Mr. Twiggs, lifting to his feet and gazing on her with a curious expression of alarm and tenderness.

“Nothing serious, dear Pop’m,” said Tudens, with a flighty little laugh,—“only it just flashed on me all at once that I’d clear forgotten poor ‘Dick’s’ supper.” And as she turned abruptly to the parrot, cooing and clucking to him playfully,—up, up from some hitherto undreamed-of depth within the yearning heart of Mr. Twiggs mutely welled the old utterance, “Tude’s a queer girl!”

“Whatever made you think of such a thing, Father?” called Tudens, gaily; and then, without waiting for an answer, went on cooing to the parrot,—“Hey, old Dickey-bird! do *you* think Tudens is a handsome young woman? and do *you* think Tudens is old enough to marry, eh?” This query delivered, she broke into a fit of merriment which so wrought upon the susceptibilities of the bird that he was heard to repeatedly declare and affirm, in most positive and unequivocal terms, that Tude had actually come home.

“Yes—*sir*, Tudens!” broke in Mr. Twiggs at last,

lighting a fresh churchwarden and settling into his old position at the grate; "have your laugh out over it now, but it's a werry serious fact, for all that."

"I know it, Father," said the girl, recovering her gravity, turning her large eyes lovingly upon him and speaking very tenderly. "I know it—oh, I know it; and many, many times when I have thought of it, and then again of your old kindly faith; all the warm wealth of your love; and our old home here, and all the happiness it ever held for me and you alike—oh, I have tried hard—indeed, indeed I have—to put all other thought away and live for you alone! But Pop'm! dear old Pop'm—" And even as the great strong breast made shelter for her own, the woman's heart within her flowed away in mists of gracious tears.

"Couldn't live without old Pop'm, could her?" half cried and laughed the happy Mr. Twiggs, tangling his clumsy fingers in the long dark hair that fell across his arm, and bending till his glad face touched her own.—  
"—Couldn't live without old Pop'm?"

"Never! never!" sobbed the girl, lifting her brimming eyes and gazing in the kind old face. "Oh, may I always live with you, Pop'm? Always?—Forever?"—

"—And a day!" said Mr. Twiggs, emphatically.

"Even after I'm—" and she hid her face again.

"Even after—*what*, Tudens?"

“After I’m—after I’m—married?” murmured Tudens, with a longing pressure.

“Nothink short!” said Mr. Twiggs;—“perwidin’,” he added, releasing one hand and smoothing back his scanty hair—“perwidin’, of course, that your man is a honest, straitferrerd feller, as aint no lordly notions nor nothink o’ that sort.”

“Nor rich?”

“Well, I aint so p’ticklar about his bein’ *pore*, ad-zackly.—Say a feller as works for his livin’, and knows how to ’usband his earnin’s thrifty-like, and allus ’as a hextry crown or two laid up against a rainy day—and a good perwider, of course,” said Mr. Twiggs, with a comfortable glance around the room.—“’ll blow me if I didn’t see a face there a-peerin’ in the winder!”

“Oh, no you didn’t,” said the girl, without raising her head. “Go on—‘and a good provider—’”

“—A good perwider,” continued Mr. Twiggs; “and a feller, of course, as has a eye out for the substantial of this life, and aint afeard o’ work—that’s the idear! that’s the idear!” said Mr. Twiggs by way of sweeping conclusion.

“And that’s all old Pop’m asks, after all?” queried the girl, with her radiant face yearning in his own.

“W’y, certainly!” said Mr. Twiggs, with heartiness. “Aint that all and everythink to make home happy?—”

catching her face between his great brown hands and kissing her triumphantly.

"Hooray for Twiggs-and Twiggs-and Twiggs-and—" cootered the drowsy bird, disjointedly.

The girl had risen.—"And you'll forgive me for marrying such a man?"

"Won't I?" said Mr. Twiggs, with a rapturous twinkle.

As he spoke, she flung her arms about his neck and pressed her lips close, close against his cheek, her own glad face now fronting the little window. She heard the clicking of the latch, the opening of the door, and the step of the intruder ere she loosed her hold.

"God bless you, Pop'm, and forgive me!—This is my husband." The new comer, Mr. Stanley, reached and grasped the hand of Mr. Twiggs, eagerly, fervidly, albeit the face he looked on then will haunt him to the hour of his death.—Yet haply, some day, when the Master takes the self-same hand within his own and whispers "Tude's come home," the old smile will return.

## AN IDYL OF THE KING

Erewhile, as Autumn, to King Arthur's court  
Came Raelus, clamouring: "Lo, has our house  
Been sacked and pillaged by a lawless band  
Of robber knaves, led on by Alstanés,  
The Night-Flower named, because of her fair face,  
All like a lily gleaming in the dusk  
Of her dark hair—and like a lily brimmed  
With dewy eyes that drip their limpid smiles  
Like poison out, for by them has been wro't  
My elder brother's doom, as much I fear.  
While three days gone was holden harvest-feast  
At Lynion castle—clinging like a gull  
High up the gray cliffs of Caerleon—  
Came, leaf-like lifted from the plain below  
As by a twisted wind, a rustling pack  
Of bandit pillagers, with Alstanés  
Bright-fluttering like a red leaf in the front.  
And ere we were aware of fell intent—  
Not knowing whether it was friend or foe—  
We found us in their toils, and all the house  
In place of guests held only prisoners—  
Save that the host, my brother, wro't upon  
By the strange beauty of the robber queen,

Was left unfettered, but by silken threads  
Of fine-spun flatteries and wanton smiles  
Of the enchantress, till her villain thieves  
Had rifled as they willed and signal given  
To get to horse again. And so they went—  
Their leader flinging backward, as she rode,  
A kiss to my mad brother—mad since then,—  
For from that sorry hour he but talked  
Of Alstanés, and her rare beauty, and  
Her purity—aye, even that he said  
Was star-white, and should light his life with love  
Or leave him groping blindly in its quest  
Thro' all eternity. So, sighing, he  
Went wandering about till set of sun,  
Then got to horse, and bade us all farewell;  
And with his glamoured eyes bent trancedly  
Upon the tumbled sands that marked the way  
The robber-woman went, he turned and chased  
His long black shadow o'er the edge of night."

—So Raelus, all seemingly befret  
With such concern as nipped his utterance  
In scraps of speech: at which Sir Lancelot,  
Lifting a slow smile to the King, and then  
Turning his cool eye on the youth—"And you  
Would track this siren-robber to her hold  
And rout her rascal followers, and free

Your brother from the meshes of this queen  
Of hearts—for there you doubtless think him?”

“Ay!”

Foamed Raelus, cheek flushed and eye aflame,—  
“So even have I tracked, and found them, too,  
And know their burrow, shrouded in a copse,  
Where, faring in my brother’s quest, I heard  
The nicker of his horse, and followed on  
And found him tethered in a thicket wild,  
As tangled in its tress of leaf and limb  
As is a madman’s hair; and down the path  
That parted it and ran across a knoll  
And dipped again, all suddenly I came  
Upon a cave, wide-yawning ’neath a beard  
Of tangled moss and vine, whence issuing  
I heard, blown o’er my senses faint and clear  
As whiffs of summer wind, my brother’s voice  
Lilting a love-song, with the burden tricked  
With dainty warblings of a woman’s tongue:  
And even as I listening bent, I heard  
Such peals of wanton merriment as made  
My own heart flutter as a bird that beats  
For freedom at the bars that prison it.  
So turned I then, and fled as one who flies  
To save himself alone—forgetful all  
Of that my dearer self—my brother.—O!”—  
Breaking as sharply as the icy blade

That loosens from the eave to slice the air  
And splinter into scales of flying frost—  
“Thy help! Thy help! A dozen goodly knights—  
Aye, even that, if so it be their hearts  
Are hungry as my own to right the wrong!”

So Raelus. And Arthur graciously  
Gave ear to him, and, patient, heard him thro’,  
And pitied him, and granted all he asked;  
Then took his hand and held it, saying, “Strong,  
And ever stronger may its grasp be knit  
About the sword that flashes in the cause  
Of good.”

Thus Raelus, on the morrow’s front,  
Trapped like a knight and shining like a star,  
Pranced from the archway of the court, and led  
His glittering lances down the gleaming road  
That river-like ran winding till it slipped  
Out of the palace view and spilled their shields  
Like twinkling bubbles o’er the mountain brim.

Then happed it that as Raelus rode, his tongue  
Kept even pace and cantered ever on  
Right merrily. His brother, as he said,  
Had such an idle soul within his breast—  
Such shallowness of fancy for his heart  
To drift about in—that he well believed  
Its anchor would lay hold on any smile

The lees of womanhood might offer him.  
As for himself, he loved his brother well,  
Yet had far liefer see him stark and white  
In marble death than that his veins should burn  
With such vitality as spent its flame  
So garishly it knew no steady blaze,  
But ever wavered round as veered the wind  
Of his conceit; for he had made his boast—  
Tho' to his own shame did he speak of it—  
That with a wink he could buy every smile  
That virtue owned. So tattled Raelus  
Till, heated with his theme, he lifted voice  
And sang the song, "The Light of Woman's  
Eyes!"

"O bright is gleaming morn on mountain hight;  
And bright the moon, slipt from its sheath of night,—  
But brighter is the light of woman's eyes.

"And bright the dewdrop, trembling on the lip  
Of some red rose, or lily petal-tip,  
Or lash of pink,—but brighter woman's eyes.

"Bright is the firefly's ever drifting spark  
That throbs its pulse of light out in the dark;  
And bright the stars,—but brighter woman's eyes.

“Bright morn or even; bright or moon or star,  
And all the many twinkling lights that are,—  
O brighter than ye all are woman’s eyes.”

So Raelus sang.—And they who rode with him  
Bewildered were, and even as he sang  
Went straggling, twos and threes, and fell behind  
To whisper wonderingly, “Is he a fool?”  
And “Does he waver in his mind?” and “Does  
The newness of adventure dazzle him?”  
So spake they each to each, till far beyond,  
With but one lothful knight in company,  
They saw him quit the beaten track, and turn  
Into the grassy margin of a wood.  
And loitering, they fell in mocking jest  
Of their strange leader! “See! why, see!” said  
one,—

“He needs no help to fight his hornets’ nest,  
But one brave knight to squire him!”—pointing on  
To where fared on the two and disappeared.

“O ay!” said one, “belike he is some old  
War-battered knight of long-forgotten age,  
That, bursting from his chrysalis, the grave,  
Comes back to show us tricks we never dreamed!”

“Or haply,” said another, with a laugh,—

“He rides ahead to tell them that he comes,  
And shrive them ere his courage catches up.”  
And merry made they all, and each in turn

Fillipped a witty pellet at his head:  
Until, at last, their shadows shrunk away  
And shortened 'neath them and the hour was noon,  
They flung them from their horses listlessly  
Within the grassy margin of the wood  
Where had passed Raelus an hour ago:  
And, hungered, spied a rustic; and they sent  
To have them such refreshment as might be  
Found at the nearest farm,—where, as it chanced,  
Was had most wholesome meat, and milk, and bread;  
And honey, too, celled in its fretted vase  
Of gummy gold, and dripping nectar-sweet  
As dreamed-of kisses from the lips of love;  
Wine, too, was broughten, rosy as the dawn  
That ushers in the morning of the heart;  
And tawny, mellow pear, whose golden ore  
Fell molten on the tongue and oozed away  
In creamy and delicious nothingness;  
And netted melon, musky as the breath  
Of breezes blown from out the Orient;  
And purple clusterings of plum and grape,  
Blurred with a dust dissolving at the touch  
Like flakes the fairies had snowed over them.  
And as the idlers basked, with toast and song  
And graceful dalliance and wanton jest,  
A sound of trampling hooves and jingling reins  
Brake sudden, stilled them; and from out a dim

Path leading from the bosky wood there came  
A troop of mounted damsels, nigh a score,  
Led by a queenly girl, in crimson clad,  
With lissome figure lithe and willowy,  
And face as fair and sweet and pure withal  
As might a maiden lily-blossom be  
Ere it has learned the sin of perfect bloom':  
Her hair, blown backward like a silken scarf  
And fondled by the sun, was glossier  
And bluer black than any raven's wing.  
"And O!" she laughed, not knowing she was heard  
By any but her fellows: "Men are fools!"  
Then drawing rein, and wheeling suddenly,  
Her charger mincing backward,—"Raelus—  
My Raelus is greater than ye all,  
Since he is such a fool that he forgets  
He is a man, and lets his tongue of love  
Run babbling like a silly child's; and, pah!  
I puff him to the winds like thistle-down!"  
And, wheeling as she spake, found staring up,  
Wide-eyed and wondering, a group of knights,  
Half lifted, as their elbows propped their heads,  
Half lying; and one, smirker than the rest,  
Stood bowing very low, with upturned eyes  
Lit with a twinkling smile: "Fair lady—and  
Most gracious gentlewomen"—seeing that  
The others drew them back as tho' abashed

And veiled their faces with all modesty,  
Tho' she, their leader, showed not any qualm,—  
“Since all unwittingly we overheard  
Your latest speech, and since we know at last  
'All men are fools,' right glad indeed am I  
That such a nest of us remains for you  
To vanquish with those eyes.” Then, serious,  
That she nor smiled nor winced, nor anything—  
“Your pardon will be to me as a shower  
Of gracious rain unto a panting drouth.”  
So bowed in humblest reverence; at which  
The damsel, turning to her followers,  
Laughed musically,—“See! he proves my words!”  
Whereat the others joined with inward glee  
Her pealing mirth; and in the merriment  
The knights chimed too, and he, the vanquished one,  
Till all the wood rang as at hunting-tide  
When bugle-rumors float about the air  
And echoes leap and revel in delight.  
Then spake the vanquished knight, with mental eye  
Sweeping the vantage-ground that chance had  
gained,—  
“Your further pardon, lady: Since the name  
Of Raelus fell from those lips of thine,  
We fain would know of him. He led us here,  
And as he went the way from whence your path

Emerges, haply you may tell us where  
He may be found?"

“What! Raelus?” she cried,—  
“He comes with you?—The brave Sir Raelus?—  
That mighty champion?—that gallant knight?—  
That peerless wonder of all nobleness?  
Then proud am I to greet ye, knowing that;  
And, certes, had I known of it ere now,  
Then had I proffered you more courtesy,  
And told you, ere the asking, that he bides  
The coming of his friends a league from this,  
Hard by a reedy mere, where in high tune  
We left him singing, nigh an hour agoe.”  
Then, as she lightly wheeled her horse about  
And signal gave to her companions  
To follow, gaily cried: “Tell Raelus  
His cousin sends to him her sad farewells  
And fond regrets, and kisses many as  
His valorous deeds are numbered in her heart.”  
And with “Fair morrow to ye, gentle knights!”  
Her steed’s hooves struck the highway at a bound;  
And dimly thro’ the dust they saw her lead  
Her fluttering cavalcade as recklessly  
As might a queen of Araby, fleet-horsed,  
Skim o’er the level sands of Syria.  
So vanished. And the knights with one accord  
Put foot in stirrup, and with puzzled minds

And many-channeled marvelings, filed in  
The woody path, and fared them on and on  
Thro' denser glooms, and ways more intricate ;  
Till, mystified at last and wholly lost,  
They made full halt, and would have turned them  
back

But that a sudden voice brake on their ears  
All piteous and wailing, as distressed :  
And, following these cries, they sharply came  
Upon an open road that circled round  
A reedy flat and sodden tract of sedge,  
Moated with stagnant water, crusted thick  
With slimy moss, wherein were wriggling things  
Entangled, and blind bubbles bulging up  
And bursting where from middle way upshot  
A tree-trunk, with its knarled and warty hands  
As tho' upheld to clutch at sliding snakes  
Or nip the wet wings of the dragonfly.  
Here gazing, lo ! they saw their comrade, he  
That had gone on with Raelus ; and he  
Was tugging to fling back into its place  
A heavy log that once had spanned the pool  
And made a footway to the sedgy flat  
Whence came the bitter wailing cries they heard.  
Then hastened they to join him in his task ;  
But, panting, as they asked of Raelus,  
All winded with his work, yet jollier

Than meadow-lark at morn, he sent his voice  
In such a twittering of merriment,  
The wail of sorrow died and laughter strewed  
Its grave with melody.

“O Raelus!

Rare Raelus!” he cried and clapped his hands,  
And even in the weeds that edged the pool  
Fell wrestling with his mirth.—“Why, Raelus,”  
He said, when he at last could speak again,  
“Drew magnet-like—you know that talk of his,—  
And so, adhesive, did I cling and cling  
Until I found us in your far advance,  
And, hidden in the wood, I stayed to say  
'Twas better we should bide your coming. ‘No.’  
Then on again; and still a second time—  
‘Shall we not bide their coming?’ ‘No!’ he said;  
And on again, until the third; and ‘No—  
We’ll push a little further.’ As we did;  
And, sudden, came upon an open glade—  
There to the northward,—by a thicket bound:  
Then he dismounted, giving me his rein,  
And, charging me to keep myself concealed,  
And if he were not back a certain time  
To ride for you and search where he had gone,  
He crossed the opening and passed from sight  
Within the thicket. I was curious:  
And so, dismounting, tethered our two steeds

And followed him ; and, creeping warily,  
Came on him where—unseen of him—I saw  
Him pause before the cave himself described  
Before us yester-noon. And here he put  
His fingers to his lips and gave a call  
Bird-like and quavering : at which a face,  
As radiant as summer sun at morn,  
Parted the viny curtains of the cave ;  
And then, a moment later, came in view,  
A woman even fairer than my sight  
Might understand. ‘What ! dare you come again ?’  
She said, as, lifting up her eyes all flashingly,  
She scorched him with a look of hate.—‘Begone !  
Or have you—traitor, villain, knave and cur,—  
Bro’t minions of the law to carry out  
The vengeance of your whimpering jealousy ?’  
Then Raelus, all cowering before  
Her queenly anger, faltered : ‘Hear me yet ;  
I do not threaten. But your love—your love !—  
O give me that. I know you pure as dew :  
Your love ! Your love !—The smile that has gone  
out  
And left my soul a midnight of despair !—  
Your love or life ! For I have even now  
Your stronghold girt about with certain doom  
If you but waver in your choice.—Your love !’  
At which, as quick as tho’t, leapt on him there

A strong man from the covert of the gloom ;  
And others, like to him, from here and there  
Came skurrying. I, turning, would have fled,  
And tied and tumbled there with Raelus.  
And him they haltered by his squirming heels  
Until he did confess such villainy  
As made me wonder if his wits were sound—  
Confessed himself a renegade—a thief—  
Aye, even one of them, save that he knew  
Not that nice honour even thieves may claim  
Among themselves.—And so ran on thro' such  
A catalogue of littlenesses, I  
For deafest shame had even stopped my ears  
But that my wrists were lockt. And when he came  
To his confession of his lie at court,  
By which was gained our knightly sympathy  
And valiant service on this fools' crusade,  
I seemed to feel the redness of my blush  
Soak thro' my very soul. There I brake in :  
'Fair lady and most gallant,—to my shame  
Do I admit we have been duped by such  
An ingrate as this bundled lump of flesh  
That I am helpless to rise up and spurn :  
Unbind me, and I promise such amends  
As knightly hands may deign to wreak upon  
A thing so vile as he.' Then, laughing, she :

‘First tell me, by your honor, where await  
Your knightly brothers and my enemies.’  
To which I answered, truthfully, I knew  
Not where you lingered, but not close at hand  
I was assured. Then all abrupt, she turned :  
‘Get every one within! We ride at once!’  
And scarce a dozen minutes ere they came  
Out-pouring from the cave in such a guise  
As made me smile from very wonderment.—  
From head to heel in woman’s dress they came,  
Clad richly, too, and trapped and tricked withal  
As maidenly, but in the face and hand,  
As ever damsels flock at holiday.  
Then were their chargers bro’t, caparisoned  
In keeping ; and they mounted, lifting us,  
Still bounden, with much jest and mockery  
Of soft caress and wanton blandishments,  
As tho’ they were of sex their dress declared.  
And so they carried us until they came  
Upon the road there as it nicks the copse;  
And so drew rein, dismounted, leaving some  
To guard their horses ; hurried us across  
This footway to the middle of the flat.  
Here Raelus was bounden to a tree,  
Stript to the waist ; my fetters cut,  
A long, keen switch put in my hand, and ‘Strike!  
Strike as all duty bids you!’ said the queen.

And so I did, with right good will at first;  
Till, softened as I heard the wretch's prayers  
Of anguish, I at last withheld my hand.  
'What! tiring?' chirpt the queen: 'Give me the  
stick!'

And swish, and swish, and mercy how it rained!  
Then all the others, forming circlewise,  
Danced round and round the howling wretch, and  
jeered

And japed at him, and mocked and scoffed at him,  
And spat upon him. And I turned away  
And hid my face; then raised it pleadingly:  
Nor would they listen my appeal for him;  
But left him so, and thonged and took me back  
Across the mere, and drew the bridge, that none  
Might go to him, and carried me with them  
Far on their way, and freed me once again;  
And back I turned, tho' loth, to succor him."  
And even as he ceased they heard the wail  
Break out anew, and crossed without a word,  
And Raelus they found, and without word  
They loosed him. And he brake away and ran  
As runs a lie the truth is hard upon.

Thus did it fare with Raelus. And they  
Who knew of it said naught at court of it;  
Nor from that day spake ever of him once,  
Nor heard of him again, nor cared to hear.

## DOLORES

LITHE-ARMED, and with satin-soft shoulders  
As white as the cream-crested wave;  
With a gaze dazing every beholder's,  
She holds every gazer a slave:  
Her hair, a fair haze, is outfloated  
And flared in the air like a flame;  
Bare-breasted, bare-browed and bare-throated—  
Too smooth for the soothliest name.

She wiles you with wine, and wrings for you  
Ripe juices of citron and grape;  
She lifts up her lute and sings for you  
Till the soul of you seeks no escape;  
And you revel and reel with mad laughter,  
And fall at her feet, at her beck,  
And the scar of her sandal thereafter  
You wear like a gyve round your neck.

## WHEN I DO MOCK

WHEN I do mock the blackness of the night  
With my despair—outweep the very dews  
And wash my wan cheeks stark of all delight,  
Denying every counsel of dear use  
In mine embittered state; with infinite  
Perversity, mine eyes drink in no sight  
Of pleasance that nor moon nor stars refuse  
In silver largess and gold twinklings bright;—  
I question me what mannered brain is mine  
That it doth trick me of the very food  
It panteth for—the very meat and wine  
That yet should plump my starvéd soul with good  
And comfortable plethora of ease,  
That I might drowse away such rhymes as these.

## MY MARY

MY Mary, O my Mary!

The simmer-skies are blue:  
The dawnin' brings the dazzle,  
An' the gloamin' brings the dew,—  
The mirk o' nicht the glory  
O' the moon, an' kindles, too,  
The stars that shift aboon the lift.—  
But nae thing brings me you!

Where is it, O my Mary,  
Ye are biding a' the while?  
I ha' wended by your window—  
I ha' waited by the stile,  
An' up an' down the river  
I ha' won for mony a mile,  
Yet never found, adrift or drown'd,  
Your lang-belated smile.

Is it forgot, my Mary,  
How glad we used to be?—  
The simmer-time when bonny bloomed  
The auld trysting-tree,—  
How there I carved the name for you,  
An' you the name for me;  
An' the gloamin' kenned it only  
When we kissed sae tenderly.

Speak ance to me, my Mary!—  
But whisper in my ear  
As light as ony sleeper's breath,  
An' a' my soul will hear;  
My heart shall stap its beating,  
An' the souging atmosphere  
Be hushed the while I leaning smile  
An' listen to you, dear!

My Mary, O my Mary!  
The blossoms bring the bees;  
The sunshine brings the blossoms,  
An' the leaves on a' the trees;  
The simmer brings the sunshine  
An' the fragrance o' the breeze,—  
But O wi'out you, Mary,  
I care nae thing for these!

We were sae happy, Mary!  
O think how ance we said—  
Wad ane o' us gae fickle,  
Or ane o' us lie dead,—  
To feel anither's kisses  
We wad feign the auld instead,  
An' ken the ither's footsteps  
In the green grass owerhead.

My Mary, O my Mary!

Are ye dochter o' the air,  
That ye vanish aye before me

As I follow everywhere?—

Or is it ye are only

But a mortal, wan wi' care?—

Syne I search through a' the kirkyird

An' I dinna find ye there.

## EROS

*THE storm of love has burst at last  
Full on me: All the world, before,  
Was like an alien, unknown shore  
Along whose verge I laughing passed.—  
But now—I laugh not any more,—  
Bowed with a silence vast in weight  
As that which falls on one who stands  
For the first time on ocean sands,  
Seeing and feeling all the great  
Awe of the waves as they wash the lands  
And billow and wallow and undulate.*

## ORLIE WILDE

A GODDESS, with a siren's grace,—  
A sun-haired girl on a craggy place  
Above a bay where fish-boats lay  
Drifting about like birds of prey.

Wrought was she of a painter's dream,—  
Wise only as are artists wise,  
My artist-friend, Rolf Herschelhiem,  
With deep sad eyes of oversize,  
And face of melancholy guise.

I pressed him that he tell to me  
This masterpiece's history.  
He turned—<sup>re</sup>turned—and thus beguiled  
Me with the tale of Orlie Wilde:—

“We artists live ideally:  
We breed our firmest facts of air;  
We make our own reality—  
We dream a thing and it is so.  
The fairest scenes we ever see  
Are mirages of memory;

The sweetest thoughts we ever know  
We plagiarize from Long-ago :  
And as the girl on canvas there  
Is marvelously rare and fair,  
'Tis only inasmuch as she  
Is dumb and may not speak to me !”  
He tapped me with his mahlstick—then  
The picture,—and went on again :

“Orlie Wilde, the fisher’s child—  
I see her yet, as fair and mild  
As ever nursling summer-day  
Dreamed on the bosom of the bay :  
For I was twenty then, and went  
Alone and long-haired—all content  
With promises of sounding name  
And fantasies of future fame,  
And thoughts that now my mind discards  
As editor a fledgling bard’s.

“At evening once I chanced to go,  
With pencil and portfolio,  
Adown the street of silver sand  
That winds beneath this craggy land,  
To make a sketch of some old scurf  
Of driftage, nosing through the surf  
A splintered mast, with knarl and strand

Of rigging-rope and tattered threads  
Of flag and streamer and of sail  
That fluttered idly in the gale  
Or whipped themselves to sadder shreds.  
The while I wrought, half listlessly,  
On my dismantled subject, came  
A sea-bird, settling on the same  
With plaintive moan, as though that he  
Had lost his mate upon the sea ;  
And—with my melancholy trend—  
It brought dim dreams half understood—  
It wrought upon my morbid mood,—  
I thought of my own voyagings  
That had no end—that have no end.—  
And, like the sea-bird, I made moan  
That I was loveless and alone.  
And when at last with weary wings  
It went upon its wanderings,  
With upturned face I watched its flight  
Until this picture met my sight :  
A goddess, with a siren's grace,—  
A sun-haired girl on a craggy place  
Above a bay where fish-boats lay  
Drifting about like birds of prey.

“In airy poise she, gazing, stood  
A matchless form of womanhood,

That brought a thought that if for me  
 Such eyes had sought across the sea,  
 I could have swam the widest tide  
 That ever mariner defied,  
 And, at the shore, could on have gone  
 To that high crag she stood upon,  
 To there entreat and say 'My Sweet,  
 Behold thy servant at thy feet.'  
 And to my soul I said: 'Above,  
 There stands the idol of thy love!'

"In this rapt, awed, ecstatic state  
 I gazed—till lo! I was aware  
 A fisherman had joined her there—  
 A weary man, with halting gait,  
 Who toiled beneath a basket's weight:  
 Her father, as I guessed, for she  
 Had run to meet him gleefully  
 And ta'en his burden to herself,  
 That perched upon her shoulder's shelf  
 So lightly that she, tripping, neared  
 A jutting crag and disappeared;  
 But left the echo of a song  
 That thrills me yet, and will as long  
 As I have being!.....

....."Evenings came  
 And went,—but each the same—the same:

She watched above, and even so  
I stood there watching from below ;  
Till, grown so bold at last, I sung,—  
(What matter now the theme thereof!)—  
It brought an answer from her tongue—  
Faint as the murmur of a dove,  
Yet all the more the song of love....

“I turned and looked upon the bay,  
With palm to forehead—eyes a-blur  
In the sea’s smile—meant but for her!—  
I saw the fish-boats far away  
In misty distance, lightly drawn  
In chalk-dots on the horizon—  
Looked back at her, long, wistfully,—  
And, pushing off an empty skiff,  
I beckoned her to quit the cliff  
And yield me her rare company  
Upon a little pleasure cruise.—  
She stood, as lothful to refuse—  
To muse for full a moment’s time,—  
Then answered back in pantomime  
‘She feared some danger from the sea  
Were she discovered thus with me.’  
I motioned then to ask her if  
I might not join her on the cliff;  
And back again, with graceful wave

Of lifted arm, she answer gave  
'She feared some danger from the sea.'

"Impatient, piqued, impetuous, I  
Sprang in the boat, and flung 'Good-bye'  
From pouted mouth with angry hand,  
And madly pulled away from land  
With lusty stroke, despite that she  
Held out her hands entreatingly:  
And when far out, with covert eye  
I shoreward glanced, I saw her fly  
In reckless haste adown the crag,  
Her hair a-flutter like a flag  
Of gold that danced across the strand  
In little mists of silver sand.  
All curious I, pausing, tried  
To fancy what it all implied,—  
When suddenly I found my feet  
Were wet; and, underneath the seat  
On which I sat, I heard the sound  
Of gurgling waters, and I found  
The boat aleak alarmingly....  
I turned and looked upon the sea,  
Whose every wave seemed mocking me;  
I saw the fishers' sails once more—  
In dimmer distance than before;  
I saw the sea-bird wheeling by,

With foolish wish that *I* could fly :  
I thought of firm earth, home and friends—  
I thought of everything that tends  
To drive a man to frenzy and  
To wholly lose his own command ;  
I thought of all my waywardness—  
Thought of a mother's deep distress ;  
Of youthful follies yet unpurged—  
Sins, as the seas, about me surged—  
Thought of the printer's ready pen  
Tomorrow drowning me again ;—  
A million things without a name—  
I thought of everything but—Fame. . . .

“A memory yet is in my mind,  
So keenly clear and sharp-defined,  
I picture every phase and line  
Of life and death, and neither mine,—  
While some fair seraph, golden-haired,  
Bends over me,—with white arms bared,  
That strongly plait themselves about  
My drowning weight and lift me out—  
With joy too great for words to state  
Or tongue to dare articulate!

“And this seraphic ocean-child  
And heroine was Orlie Wilde :  
And thus it was I came to hear

Her voice's music in my ear—  
Aye, thus it was Fate paved the way  
That I walk desolate today!".....

The artist paused and bowed his face  
Within his palms a little space,  
While reverently on his form  
I bent my gaze and marked a storm  
That shook his frame as wrathfully  
As some typhoon of agony,  
And fraught with sobs—the more profound  
For that peculiar laughing sound  
We hear when strong men weep.... I lent  
With warmest sympathy—I bent  
To stroke with soothing hand his brow,  
He murmuring—" 'Tis over now!—  
And shall I tie the silken thread  
Of my frail romance?" "Yes," I said.—  
He faintly smiled; and then, with brow  
In kneading palm, as one in dread—  
His tasseled cap pushed from his head;—  
" "Her voice's music," I repeat,"  
He said,—"'twas sweet—O passing sweet!—  
Though she herself, in uttering  
Its melody, proved not the thing  
Of loveliness my dreams made meet  
For me—there, yearning, at her feet—

Prone at her feet—a worshiper,—  
For lo! she spake a tongue,' moaned he,  
“Unknown to me;—unknown to me  
As mine to her—as mine to her.”

## LEONAINIE

LEONAINIE—Angels named her;  
And they took the light  
Of the laughing stars and framed her  
In a smile of white;  
And they made her hair of gloomy  
Midnight, and her eyes of bloomy  
Moonshine, and they brought her to me  
In the solemn night.—

In a solemn night of summer,  
When my heart of gloom  
Blossomed up to greet the comer  
Like a rose in bloom;  
All forebodings that distressed me  
I forgot as Joy caressed me—  
(*Lying* Joy! that caught and pressed me  
In the arms of doom!)

Only spake the little lisper  
In the Angel-tongue;  
Yet I, listening, heard her whisper—  
“Songs are only sung  
Here below that they may grieve you—  
Tales but told you to deceive you,—  
So must Leonainie leave you  
While her love is young.”

Then God smiled and it was morning.

Matchless and supreme,

Heaven's glory seemed adorning

Earth with its esteem :

Every heart but mine seemed gifted

With the voice of prayer, and lifted

Where my Leonainie drifted

From me like a dream.

## TO A JILTED SWAIN

GET thee back neglected friends ;  
And repay, as each one lends,  
Tithes of shallow-sounding glee  
Or keen-ringing raillery :  
Get thee from lone vigils ; be  
But in jocund company,  
Where is laughter and acclaim  
Boisterous above the name.—  
Get where sulking husbands sip  
Alehouse cheer, with pipe at lip ;  
And where Mol the barmaid saith  
Curst is she that marryeth.

## THE VOICES

DOWN in the night I hear them :

The Voices—unknown—ungessed,—  
That whisper, and lisp, and murmur,  
And will not let me rest.—

Voices that seem to question,  
In unknown words, of me,  
Of fabulous ventures, and hopes and dreams  
Of this and the World to be.

Voices of mirth and music,  
As in sumptuous homes ; and sounds  
Of mourning, as of gathering friends  
In country burial-grounds.

Cadence of maiden voices—  
Their lovers' blent with these ;  
And of little children singing,  
As under orchard trees.

And often, up from the chaos  
Of my deepest dreams, I hear  
Sounds of their phantom laughter  
Filling the atmosphere :

They call to me from the darkness ;  
They cry to me from the gloom,  
Till I start sometimes from my pillow  
And peer through the haunted room ;

When the face of the moon at the window  
Wears a pallor like my own,  
And seems to be listening with me  
To the low, mysterious tone,—

The low, mysterious clamor  
Of voices that seem to be  
Striving in vain to whisper  
Of secret things to me ;—

Of a something dread to be warned of ;  
Of a rapture yet withheld ;  
Or hints of the marvelous beauty  
Of songs unsyllabled.

But ever and ever the meaning  
Falters and fails and dies,  
And only the silence quavers  
With the sorrow of my sighs.

And I answer:—O Voices, ye may not  
    Make me to understand  
Till my own voice, mingling with you,  
    Laughs in the Shadow-land.

*A BAREFOOT BOY*

*A BAREFOOT BOY! I mark him at his play—  
For May is here once more, and so is he,—  
His dusty trousers, rolled half to the knee,  
And his bare ankles grimy, too, as they :  
Cross-hatchings of the nettle, in array  
Of feverish stripes, hint vividly to me  
Of woody pathways winding endlessly  
Along the creek, where even yesterday  
He plunged his shrinking body—gaspèd and shook—  
Yet called the water “warm,” with never lack  
Of joy. And so, half enviously I look  
Upon this graceless barefoot and his track,—  
His toe stubbed—aye, his big toe-nail knocked back  
Like unto the clasp of an old pocket-book.*

## THE YOUTHFUL PATRIOT

O WHAT did the little boy do  
'At nobody wanted him to?  
Didn't do nothin' but romp an' run,  
An' whoop an' holler an' bang his gun  
An' bust fire-crackers, an' ist have fun—  
An' 'at's all the little boy done!

## PONCHUS PILUT

PONCHUS PILUT *used* to be  
 Ist a *Slave*, an' now he's *free*.  
 Slaves wuz on'y ist before  
 The War wuz—an' *ain't* no more.

He works on our place fer us,—  
 An' comes here—*sometimes* he does.  
 He shocks corn an' shucks it.—An'  
 He makes hominy “by han’!”—

Wunst he bringed us some, one trip,  
 Tied up in a piller-slip:  
 Pa says, when Ma cooked it, “MY!  
 This-here's gooder'n you *buy!*”

Ponchus *pats* fer me an' sings;  
 An' he says most *funny* things!  
 Ponchus calls a dish a “*deesh*”—  
 Yes, an' *he* calls fishes “*feesh*”!

When Ma want him eat wiv us  
 He says, “'Skuse me—'deed you mus'!—  
 Ponchus know good manners, Miss.—  
 He aint eat wher' White-folks is!”

'Lindy takes *his* dinner out  
 Wher' he's workin'—roun' about.—  
 Wunst he et his dinner, spread  
 In our ole wheel-borry-bed.

*Ponchus Pilut* says "'at's not  
 His *right* name,—an' done fergot  
 What his *sho'-nuff* name is now—  
 An' don' matter none *nohow!*"

Yes, an' Ponchus he'ps Pa, too,  
 When our *butcherin's* to do,  
 An' scalds hogs—an' says "Take care  
 'Bout it, er you'll *set the hair!*"

Yes, an' out in our back-yard  
 He he'ps 'Lindy rendur lard;  
 An', wite in the fire there, he  
 Roast' a pig-tail wunst fer me.—

An' 'ist nen th'ole tavurn-bell  
 Rung, down town, an' he says "Well!—  
 Hear dat! *Lan' o' Caanan*, Son,  
 Aint dat bell say '*Pig-tail done!*'

—'*Pig-tail done!*  
 Go call Son!—  
 Tell dat  
 Chile dat  
*Pig-tail done!*'

## A TWINTORETTE

HO! my little maiden  
    With the glossy tresses,  
    Come thou and dance with me  
    A measure all divine;  
Let my breast be laden  
    With but thy caresses—  
    Come thou and glancingly  
    Mate thy face with mine.

Thou shalt trill a rondel,  
    While my lips are purling  
    Some dainty twitterings  
    Sweeter than the birds';  
And, with arms that fondle  
    Each as we go twirling,  
    We will kiss, with titterings,  
    Lisps and loving words.

**SLUMBER-SONG**

SLEEP, little one! The Twilight folds her gloom  
Full tenderly about the drowsy Day,  
And all his tinselled hours of light and bloom  
Like toys are laid away.

Sleep! sleep! The noon-sky's airy cloud of white  
Has deepened wide o'er all the azure plain;  
And, trailing through the leaves, the skirts of Night  
Are wet with dews as rain.

But rest thou sweetly, smiling in thy dreams,  
With round fists tossed like roses o'er thy head,  
And thy transc'd lips and eyelids kissed with gleams  
Of rapture perfected.

## THE CIRCUS PARADE

THE CIRCUS!—The Circus!—The throb of the drums,  
And the blare of the horns, as the Band-wagon comes ;  
The clash and the clang of the cymbals that beat,  
As the glittering pageant winds down the long street !

In the Circus parade there is glory clean down  
From the first spangled horse to the mule of the Clown,  
With the gleam and the glint and the glamour and glare  
Of the days of enchantment all glimmering there !

And there are the banners of silvery fold  
Caressing the winds with their fringes of gold,  
And their high-lifted standards, with spear-tips aglow,  
And the helmeted knights that go riding below.

There's the Chariot, wrought of some marvelous shell  
The Sea gave to Neptune, first washing it well  
With its fabulous waters of gold, till it gleams  
Like the galleon rare of an Argonaut's dreams.

And the Elephant, too, (with his undulant stride  
That rocks the high throne of a king in his pride),  
That in jungles of India shook from his flanks  
The tigers that leapt from the Jujubee-banks.

Here's the long, ever-changing, mysterious line  
Of the Cages, with hints of their glories divine  
From the barred little windows, cut high in the rear,  
Where the close-hidden animals' noses appear.

Here's the Pyramid-car, with its splendor and flash,  
And the Goddess on high, in a hot-scarlet sash  
And a pen-wiper skirt!—O the rarest of sights  
Is this "Queen of the Air" in cerulean tights!

Then the far-away clash of the cymbals, and then  
The swoon of the tune ere it wakens again  
With the capering tones of the gallant cornet  
That go dancing away in a mad minute.

The Circus!—The Circus!—The throb of the drums,  
And the blare of the horns, as the Band-wagon comes;  
The clash and the clang of the cymbals that beat,  
As the glittering pageant winds down the long street.

## FOLKS AT LONESOMEVILLE

PORE-FOLKS lives at Lonesomeville—

Lawzy! but they're pore!

Houses with no winders in,

And hardly any door:

Chimbley all tore down, and no

Smoke in that at all—

Ist a stovepipe through a hole

In the kitchen-wall!

Pump that's got no handle on;

And no woodshed—And, *wooh!*—

Mighty cold there, choppin' wood,

Like pore-folks has to do!—

Winter-time, and snow and sleet

Ist fairly fit to kill!—

Hope to goodness *Santy Claus*

Goes to Lonesomeville!

---

THE THREE JOLLY HUNTERS

O THERE were three jolly hunters ;  
And a-hunting they did go,  
With a spaniel-dog, and a pointer-dog,  
And a setter-dog also.

Looky there !

And they hunted and they hal-looed ;  
And the first thing they did find  
Was a dinging-dangling hornet's-nest  
A-swinging in the wind.

Looky there !

And the first one said—"What is it?"  
Said the next, "We'll punch and see:"  
And the next one said, a mile from there,  
"I wish we'd let it be!"

Looky there !

And they hunted and they hal-looed ;  
And the next thing they did raise  
Was a bobbin' bunnie cotton-tail  
That vanished from their gaze.

Looky there !

One said it was a hot baseball,  
Zippt through the brambly thatch,  
But the others said 'twas a note by post,  
Or a telegraph-dispatch:

Looky there!

So they hunted and they hal-looed;  
And the next thing they did sight  
Was a great big bulldog chasing them,  
And a farmer, hollerin' "Skite!"

Looky there!

And the first one said, "Hi-jinktum!"  
And the next, "Hi-jinktum-jee!"  
And the last one said, "Them very words  
Had just occurred to me!

*Looky there!"*

## THE LITTLE DOG-WOGGY

A LITTLE Dog-Woggy  
Once walked round the World:  
So he shut up his house; and, forgetting  
His two puppy-children  
Locked in there, he curled  
Up his tail in pink bombazine netting,  
And set out  
To walk round  
The World.

He walked to Chicago,  
And heard of the Fair—  
Walked on to New York, where he *never*,—  
In fact, he discovered  
That many folks there  
Thought less of Chicago than ever,  
As he musing-  
Ly walked round  
The World.

He walked on to Boston,  
And round Bunker Hill,  
Bow-wowed, but no citizen heered him—  
Till he ordered his baggage  
And called for his bill,

And then, bless their souls! how they cheered  
him,  
As he gladly  
Walked on round  
The World.

He walked and walked on  
For a year and a day—  
Dropped down at his own door and panted,  
Till a teamster came driving  
Along the highway  
And told him that house there was ha'nted  
By the two starve-  
Dest pups in  
The World.

## CHARMS

## I

## FOR CORNS AND THINGS

PRUNE your corn in the gray of the morn

With a blade that's shaved the dead,  
And barefoot go and hide it so

The rain will rust it red:

Dip your foot in the dew and put

A print of it on the floor,

And stew the fat of a brindle cat,

And say this o'er and o'er:—

Corny! morny! bladey! dead!

Gorey! sorey! rusty! red!

Footsy! putsy! floory! stew!

Fatsy! catsy!

Mew!

Mew!

Come grease my corn

In the gray of the morn!

Mew! Mew! Mew!

## II

## TO REMOVE FRECKLES—SCOTCH ONES

GAE the mirkest night an' stan'  
Twixt twa graves, ane either han';  
Wi' the right han' fumblin' ken  
Wha the deid mon's name's ance ben,—  
Wi' the ither han' sae read  
Wha's neist neebor o' the deid;  
An it be or wife or lass,  
Smoor tha twa han's i' the grass,  
Weshin' either wi' the ither,  
Then tha faice wi' baith thegither;  
Syne ye'll seeket at cock-craw—  
Ilka freeckle's gang awa!

A FEW OF THE BIRD-FAMILY

THE Old Bob-White, and Chipbird ;  
The Flicker, and Chee-wink,  
And little hopty-skip bird  
Along the river-brink.

The Blackbird, and Snowbird,  
The Chicken-hawk, and Crane ;  
The glossy old black Crow-bird,  
And Buzzard down the lane.

The Yellow-bird, and Redbird,  
The Tom-Tit, and the Cat ;  
The Thrush, and that Red*head*-bird  
The rest's all pickin' at!

The Jay-bird, and the Bluebird,  
The Sap-suck, and the Wren—  
The Cockadoodle-doo-bird,  
And our old Settin'-hen!

## THROUGH SLEEPY-LAND

WHERE do you go when you go to sleep,  
Little Boy! Little Boy! where?  
'Way—'way in where's Little Bo-Peep,  
And Little Boy Blue, and the Cows and Sheep  
A-wandering 'way in there—in there—  
A-wandering 'way in there!

And what do you see when lost in dreams,  
Little Boy, 'way in there?  
Firefly-glimmers and glowworm-gleams,  
And silvery, low, slow-sliding streams,  
And mermaids, smiling out—'way in where  
They're a-hiding—'way in there!

Where do you go when the Fairies call,  
Little Boy! Little Boy! where?  
Wade through the dews of the grasses tall,  
Hearing the weir and the waterfall  
And the Wee Folk—'way in there—in there—  
And the Kelpies—'way in there!

And what do you do when you wake at dawn,  
Little Boy! Little Boy! what?  
Hug my Mommy and kiss her on  
Her smiling eyelids, sweet and wan,  
And tell her everything I've forgot  
About, a-wandering 'way in there—  
Through the blind-world 'way in there!

## THE TRESTLE AND THE BUCK-SAW

THE Trestle and the Buck-Saw  
Went out a-walking once,  
And staid away and staid away  
For days and weeks and months:  
And when they got back home again,  
Of all that had occurred,  
The neighbors said the gossips said  
They never said a word.

## THE KING OF OO-RINKTUM-JING

DAINTY Baby Austin!  
Your Daddy's gone to Boston  
    To see the King  
    Of Oo-Rinktum-Jing  
And the whale he rode acrost on!

Boston Town's a city:  
But O its such a pity!—  
    They'll greet the King  
    Of Oo-Rinktum-Jing  
With never a nursery ditty!

But me and you and Mother  
Can stay with Baby-brother,  
    And sing of the King  
    Of Oo-Rinktum-Jing  
And laugh at one-another!

So what cares Baby Austin  
If Daddy *has* gone to Boston  
    To see the King  
    Of Oo-Rinktum-Jing  
And the whale he rode acrost on?

## THE TOY PENNY-DOG

MA put my Penny-Dog  
Safe on the shelf,  
And left no one home but him,  
Me and myself ;  
So I climbed a big chair  
I pushed to the wall—  
But the Toy Penny-Dog  
Aint there at all !  
I went back to Dolly—  
And *she* 'uz gone too,  
And little Switch 'uz layin' there ;—  
And Ma says "*Boo!*"—  
And there she wuz a-peepin'  
Through the front-room door :  
And I aint goin' to be a bad  
Little girl no more !

*JARGON-JINGLE*

TAWDERY!—faddery! Feathers and fuss!  
Mummery!—flummery! wusser and wuss!  
All o' Humanity—Vanity Fair!—  
Heaven for nothin', and—nobody there!

## THE GREAT EXPLORER

HE sailed o'er the weltery watery miles  
For a tabular year-and-a-day,  
To the kindless, kinkable Cannibal Isles  
He sailed and he sailed away!  
He captured a loon in a wild lagoon  
And a yak that weeps and smiles,  
And a bustard-bird, and a blue baboon,  
In the kindless Cannibal Isles  
And wilds  
Of the kinkable Cannibal Isles.

He swiped in bats with his butterfly-net,  
In the kinkable Cannibal Isles,  
And got short-waisted and over-het  
In the haunts of the crocodiles;  
And nine or ten little Pigmy Men  
Of the quaintest shapes and styles  
He shipped back home to his old Aunt Jenn,  
From the kindless Cannibal Isles  
And wilds  
Of the kinkable Cannibal Isles.

## THE SCHOOLBOY'S FAVORITE

OVER the river and through the wood  
 Now Grandmother's cap I spy :  
 Hurrah for the fun! Is the pudding done?  
 Hurrah for the pumpkin-pie!

—SCHOOL READER.

FER any boy 'at's little as me,  
 Er any little girl,  
 That-un's the goodest poetry-piece  
 In any book in the worl'!  
 An' ef grown-peoples wuz little ag'in  
 I bet they'd say so, too,  
 Ef they'd go see *their* ole Gran'ma,  
 Like our Pa lets *us* do!

Over the river an' through the wood  
 Now Gran'mother's cap I spy :  
 Hurrah fer the fun!—Is the puddin' done?—  
 Hurrah fer the punkin-pie!

An' 'll tell you *why* 'at's the goodest piece:—  
 'Cause it's ist like *we* go  
 To *our* Gran'ma's, a-visitun there,  
 When our Pa he says so;

An' Ma she fixes my little cape-coat  
 An' little fuzz-cap; an' Pa  
 He tucks me away—an' yells "*Hoo-ray!*"—  
 An' whacks Ole Gray, an' drives the sleigh  
 Fastest you ever saw!

*Over the river an' through the wood  
 Now Gran'mother's cap I spy:  
 Hurrah fer the fun!—Is the puddin' done?—  
 Hurrah for the punkin-pie!*

An' Pa ist snuggles me 'tween his knees—  
 An' I he'p hold the lines,  
 An' peek out over the buffalo-robe;—  
 An' the wind ist *blows!*—an' the snow ist *snows!*—  
 An' the sun ist shines! an' shines!—  
 An' th' ole horse tosses his head an' coughs  
 The frost back in our face.—  
 An' I' ruther go to my Gran'ma's  
 Than any other place!

*Over the river an' through the wood  
 Now Gran'mother's cap I spy:  
 Hurrah fer the fun!—Is the puddin' done?—  
 Hurrah for the punkin-pie!*

An' all the peoples they is in town  
Watches us whizzin' past  
To go a-visitun *our* Gran'ma's,  
Like we all went there last;—  
But *they* can't go, like ist *our* folks  
An' Johnny an' Lotty, an' three  
Er four neighbor-childerns, an' Rober-ut Volney  
An' Charley an' Maggy an' me!

*Over the river an' through the wood  
Now Gran'mother's cap I spy:  
Hurrah fer the fun!—Is the puddin' done?—  
Hurrah fer the punkin-pie!*

## ALBUMANIA

*Some certain misty yet tenable signs  
Of the oracular Raggedy Man,  
Happily found in these fugitive lines  
Culled from the album of 'Lizabuth Ann.*

## FRIENDSHIP

O FRIENDSHIP, when I muse on you,  
As thoughtful minds, O Friendship, do,  
I muse, O Friendship, o'er and o'er,  
O Friendship—as I said before.

## LIFE

“WHAT is Life?” If the *Dead* might say,  
'Spect they'd answer, under breath,  
Sorry-like yet a-laughin':—A  
Poor pale yesterday of Death!

## LIFE'S HAPPIEST HOURS

BEST, I guess,  
Was the old “*Recess.*”—  
'Way back there's where I'd love to be—  
Shet of each lesson and hateful rule,  
When the whole round World was as sweet to me  
As the big ripe apple I brung to School.

## MARION-COUNTY MAN HOMESICK ABROAD

I, who had hob-nobbed with the shades of kings,  
And canvassed grasses from old masters' graves,  
And in cathedrals stood and looked at things  
In niches, crypts and naves ;—  
My heavy heart was sagging with its woe,  
Nor Hope to prop it up, nor Promise, nor  
One woman's hands—and O I wanted so  
To be felt sorry for !

## BIRDY! BIRDY!

THE Redbreast loves the blooming bough—  
The Bluebird loves it same as he ;—  
And as they sit and sing there now,  
So do I sing to thee—  
Only, dear heart, unlike the birds,  
I do not climb a tree  
To sing—  
I do not climb a tree.

---

WHEN o'er this page in happy years to come,  
Thou jokest on these lines and on my name,  
Doubt not my love and say, "Though he lies dumb,  
He's lying, just the same!"

## THE LITTLE MOCK-MAN

THE Little Mock-man on the Stairs—  
 He mocks the lady's horse 'at rares  
     At bi-sickles an' things,—  
 He mocks the mens 'at rides 'em, too;  
 An' mocks the Movers, drivin' through,  
 An' hollers "Here's the way *you* do  
     With them-air hitchin-strings!"  
     "Ho! ho!" he'll say,  
         Ole Settlers' Day,  
 When they're all jogglin' by,—  
     "You look like *this*,"  
         He'll say, an' twis'  
     His mouth an' squint his eye  
 An' 'tend like *he* wuz beat the bass  
     Drum at both ends—an' toots and biales  
 Ole dinner-horn an' puffs his face—  
     The Little Mock-man on the Stairs!

The Little Mock-man on the Stairs  
 Mocks all the peoples all he cares  
     'At passes up an' down!  
 He mocks the chickens round the door,  
 An' mocks the girl 'at scrubs the floor,  
 An' mocks the rich, an' mocks the pore,  
     An' ever'thing in town!

"Ho! ho!" says he,  
 To you er me;  
 An' ef we turns an' looks,  
 He's all cross-eyed  
 An' mouth all wide  
 Like Giunts is, in books.—  
 "Ho! ho!" he yells, "look here at *me*,"  
 An' rolls his fat eyes roun' an' glares,—  
 "You look like *this*!" he says, says he—  
 The Little Mock-man on the Stairs!

*THE Little Mock—*

*The Little Mock—*

*The Little Mock-man on the Stairs,*  
*He mocks the music-box an' clock,*  
*An' roller-sofy an' the chairs;*  
*He mocks his Pa an' spec's he wears;*  
*He mocks the man 'at picks the pears*  
*An' plums an' peaches on the shares;*  
*He mocks the monkeys an' the bears*  
*On picture-bills, an' rips an' tears*  
*'Em down,—an' mocks ist all he cares,*  
*An' EVER'body EVER'wheres!*

## SUMMER-TIME AND WINTER-TIME

IN the golden noon-shine,  
Or in the pink of dawn;  
In the silver moonshine,  
Or when the moon is gone;  
Open eyes, or drowsy lids,  
'Wake or 'most asleep,  
I can hear the kitydids,—  
“Cheep! Cheep! Cheep!”

Only in the winter-time  
Do they ever stop,  
In the chip-and-splinter-time,  
When the backlogs pop,—  
Then it is, the kettle-lids,  
While the sparkles leap,  
Lisp like the katydids,—  
“Cheep! Cheep! Cheep!”

## HOME-MADE RIDDLES—

## ALL BUT THE ANSWERS

## I

NO one ever saw it  
Till I dug it from the ground;  
I found it when I lost it,  
And lost it when I found:  
I washed it, and dressed it,  
And buried it once more—  
Dug it up, and loved it then  
Better than before.  
I was paid for finding it—  
I don't know why or how,—  
But I lost, found, and kept it,  
And haven't got it now.

## II

Sometimes it's all alone—  
Sometimes in a crowd;  
It says a thousand bright things,  
But never talks aloud.  
Everybody loves it,  
And likes to have it call,

But if you shouldn't happen to,  
It wouldn't care at all.  
First you see or hear of it,  
It's a-singing,—then  
You may look and listen,  
But it never sings again.

THE LOVELY CHILD

LILIES are both pure and fair,  
Growing midst the roses there—  
Roses, too, both red and pink,  
Are quite beautiful, I think.

But of all bright blossoms—best—  
Purest—fairest—loveliest,—  
Could there be a sweeter thing  
Than a primrose, blossoming?

## THE YELLOW-BIRD

HEY! my little Yellow-bird,  
What you doing there?  
Like a flashing sun-ray,  
Flitting everywhere:  
Dangling down the tall weeds  
And the hollyhocks,  
And the lordly sunflowers  
Along the garden-walks.

Ho! my gallant Golden-bill,  
Pecking 'mongst the weeds,  
You must have for breakfast  
Golden flower-seeds:  
Won't you tell a little fellow  
What you have for *tea*?—  
'Spect a peck o' yellow, mellow  
Pippin on the tree.

## ENVOY

WHEN but a little boy, it seemed  
    My dearest rapture ran  
In fancy ever, when I dreamed  
    I was a man—a man!

Now—sad perversity!—my theme  
    Of rarest, purest joy  
Is when, in fancy blest, I dream  
    I am a little boy.







James Whitcomb Riley's Works



LIBRARY





I have felt more interest in the Hoosier poet's work of late than in almost anything else which has appeared in a literary way. I tell you James Whitcomb Riley is nothing short of a born poet and a veritable genius. He gets down into the heart of a man, and in a most telling way, too. I think he is a later Hosea Biglow, quite as original as the latter and more versatile in certain respects. I own a good deal of enthusiasm for this later product of Indiana soil, this delineator of lowly humanity, who sings with so much fervor, pathos, humor and grace, and who has done things, is it not correct to say, which will long be remembered, perhaps, which will outlast the more laborious work of some of the older and more pretentious poets.—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*





## Neghborly Poems.

THIRTY-SIX Poems in Hoosier Dialect, including The Old Swimmin' Hole and 'Leven More Poems, with proems.

The Old Swimmin' Hole, etc., first appeared over the *nom de plume* of Benj. F. Johnson, of Boone, and attracted wide-spread attention before the identity of the real author was discovered.

To this series have been added TWENTY-FOUR more poems of the same character under the same *pseudonym*, which have not heretofore been published, with six photo-engravings, and entitled as above.

They are idiomatic, droll and charming. True to nature, delightfully felicitous in expression, refreshing and genuine.

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NEIGHBORLY POEMS are idiomatic, droll and charming. True to nature, delightfully felicitous in expression, refreshing and genuine.—*Indianapolis Sentinel*.

Mr. Riley has discovered the essential beauty of nature in the fields, and of pathos and sentiment in the heart of man, and has interpreted it with a fidelity and simplicity which will make his poetry live long after the elegant transcription from books and the inspirations from foreign life have faded away into the nothingness which is the doom of all artificial and imitation.—*Providence Journal*.

When one begins to feel sour with the world and life and himself and everybody else, how refreshing and rebuilding would be the reading of *When the Frost Is on the Punkin*.—*Daily News, Birmingham, Ala.*

Mr. Riley, more than any other American poet who has essayed this style of poetic writing, has enriched this peculiar field with gems that will constitute a permanent part of our literature.—*Omaha Bee*.

A collection of exquisite dialect studies by "Benj. F. Johnson," of whom the true story is told by J. Whitcomb Riley. Sir Edwin Arnold classes Riley among the greatest of living poets, and that this is not over-praise the present volume attests.—*Baltimore Daily News*.

The charm of these intensely reflective poems is hard to describe. Their note is always genuine and their allurements curiously certain.—*Providence News*.

Benjamin F. Johnson of Boone—a "rare Ben Johnson" indeed—fathered these cute country whims, some of the best that the truest poet of to-day has given the world, in the quaint dressing of the Hoosier dialect.—*Evening News, Buffalo*.

The poems included in this neat volume are idiomatic, droll and charming. They depict common things in an unusually natural way and touch many sympathetic chords.—*The Treasury, New York*.



## Sketches in Prose and Occasional Verses.

Originally published as **THE BOSS GIRL and Other Stories**. **TWELVE** graphic sketches, each prefaced by a poem.

The stories are unconventional and told simply, with a subtle humor. They are intensely sympathetic with glowing descriptions and generous inspiration. They appeal powerfully to the humane sentiment and the reader is soon lost in the engaging simplicity of the narrative. The poems cling in the mind and no one who reads them can easily forget "Tiny Tim," or "Old-Fashioned Roses," or the "Elf Child," with its now world-famous refrain, "The Gobbl-uns 'll git you—Ef you—Don't—Watch—Out!"

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Riley is, above all things, the poet of childhood. The accent, the stammer, the mispronunciation of childhood—all this he is able to give with a startling fidelity to nature. And he understands the soul as well as the language of the childhood. In the volume to which I am alluding there is a portrait of a child-servant and of her mysterious fascination to the children of whom she is the companion as a teller of ghost stories that is one of the most marvelous pictures of child-thought in literature. It is called "THE ELF CHILD." It is a favorite piece of recitation in America. Perhaps I am a little prejudiced, but one of the charms of Riley to me is the beautiful life he reveals in the western households of America. One can see from the intimacy of the relations between the servants and the children and the household generally, the intensity and closeness of their joys, sorrows and fortunes—what depths of generosity and kindness there is under the hard, dry, outer shell of American life in those bleak, desolate and cheerless regions of the pioneers of civilization. For instance, read the story of MARY SUSAN CLARK in this collection, and if you can get through it with dry eyes and without a softening of heart to America and American life you must have a poor taste for literature or an extremely bad heart.

In the volume before me there is one exquisite little sketch which can never leave one's memory. I alluded to the story some weeks ago. It is called "Where Is Mary Alice Smith?" It is a thoroughly American story, and yet I think it will say more to an English than to an American reader; at least to an English reader who knows something of the social condition of America. I have already commented on the sweet sense Mr. Riley gives of the intimacy and tenderness of the relations between the children and servants of an American household—relations that, to me at least, appear to make life so much tenderer, easier and more human than the frigidity of relations in our own households, with their strictly commercial basis. The portrait of the girl has that subtlety which is in nearly all Mr. Riley's portraits of childhood. He seizes and reproduces that indefinable wistfulness—that curiously touching and tender mysteriousness that is about all childhood—the mysteriousness that partly suggested to Wordsworth the music and the eloquence of his greatest ode.—*Sunday Sun, London.*



## Afterwhiles.

SIXTY-TWO poems and sonnets. Serious, pathetic, humorous and dialect. Full of vivid imagination, tender emotions and reflections.

*"Where are they—the Afterwhiles—  
Luring us the lengthening miles  
Of our lives."*

No lover of true poesy will fail to find in this book much to delight and thrill. The author with delicate fancy reveals the great heart of nature and makes beautiful the homely things of life. The serious poems show genius and a rare insight, the sonnets are living aspirations and the dialect touches those quieter chords so charming in true poetry.

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It is easy, from his book of poems, AFTERWHILES to see how the work of Mr. James Whitcomb Riley has grown so widely popular in the United States. Mostly his verse resembles Poe. But much more than that author he gives expression to the child-like simplicity which distinguishes Brother Jonathan among the nations in all matters of art. The poems in dialect are more enjoyable than the others for their humor and character.—*The Scotsman, Edinburg.*

The name of James Whitcomb Riley is fast becoming popular, and in his handling of dialect poetry he has been aptly called the Robert Burns of America. His poems need no introduction to a people who entertain for him more than the usual admiration given to her sweet singers. Mr. Riley can claim originality for his work; it is a fresh conquest in the realm of distinct American poetry. His work is peculiar to himself and marks a departure in our national literature. He sings of commonplace things around us and invests them with exquisite beauty and grace. He delights in calling up the fond memories of yore to clothe them with the fancy and fervor of his wondrous magical muse. The commonest object, the most prosaic theme becomes wonderfully alive and full of pathetic significance under his spell; so that we are often reminded of Wordsworth by his manner:

“Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.”

—*Christian Nation.*

The first thing that strikes the reader of James Whitcomb Riley is his originality. Here, evidently, is a man who would have felt the impulse to speak tunefully and to touch the springs of humor and of pathos had he lived before the invention of alphabets. In the absence of books, the lessons to be drawn from nature and from human life would have sufficed. With his own hand has been garnered his knowledge of the outer and of the inner world. He has seen with his own eyes, listened with his own ears, known in his own heart the sorrows and joys that he depicted. His landscapes are transcripts of his native woods and fields; all the flowers, the trees, the buds, the manifold forms of animal life, and all the relations of man to outward nature which we encounter in his pages are such as he has actually seen.—*New York Sun.*



## Pipes o' Pan.

FIVE sketches and FIFTY poems. The sketches are separated by four books of TWELVE poems each. The stories are full of life and unflagging interest, told in the author's artless way. They are simply written, full of pathos and humor, and reveal a keen insight to human nature.

The poems are hearty, inspiring and impressive. The subtler feelings are shown seriously and humorously with a climax that makes one eagerly and rapturously resign his visions to greet the living presence. The pictures are so deftly drawn that they seem to breathe with life. The half-forgotten things come back clearly and as bright as the noon-day sun and the happy heart brims over in memory of the days gone by.

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His work in prose is really exquisite, though comparatively few are acquainted with it. Here is the conclusion of one of his tales, published in the "PIPES O' PAN at Zekesbury." It is as simply natural as fact; as delicate as truth. It is at once so probable and so artistic that no one would venture to guess whether the writer created the incident or whether the incident created the tale. Here it is:

"Well, Annie had just stooped to lift up one o' the little girls when the feller turned, and the'r eyes met. 'Annie, my wife!' he says; and Annie she kind o' gave a little yelp like, and come a-flutterin' down in his arms; and the jug o' worter rolled clean acrost the road, and turned a somerset and knocked the cob out of its mouth, and jist laid back and hollered 'good-good-good-good-good!' like ef it knowed what was up, and was jist as glad and tickled as the rest of us."—*Omaha World-Herald*.

It is not to the taste of many readers to turn suddenly from tales written in a rude dialect to sentimental strains on "The Days Gone By" and an "Old Sweetheart." Still, it is but fair to say that there is humor in the tale called "Mrs. Miller," a picturesque realism in "An Old Settler's Story," and that more than one of the author's narrative poems are genuinely pathetic.—*London Post*.



## Rhymes of Childhood.

Not for children only but of childhood days. ONE HUNDRED AND TWO dialect and serious poems.

Mr. Riley quaintly brings before the reader his early hopes and ambitions. We feel again the charms which nature threw around us in the innocence of life, the cherished plans formed midst the simple duties of childhood, the ideals of limited knowledge, the domestic attachments, the castles on high. The flowers, the birds, the glistening dew drop with its glory of the sunbeam, the dreamy noontide, the gleaming starlight, the chidings, the corrections, the raptures, the fears, assume shape by the magic wand of the poet. Care flies away as we once more enjoy the feasts, or fondle the pets or feel the bee sting of long ago.

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James Whitcomb Riley's RHYMES OF CHILDHOOD would be pronounced as addressed to grown people, rather than to children of the age and experience of those whose thoughts and feelings figure in these pages. It is a delightful book from cover to cover, and displays a rare insight into the habits of mind of the child. The dialect, too, is true to nature, and seldom, if ever, overdrawn.—*Overland Monthly*.

It is impossible not to give a hearty welcome to this bundle of rhyme with its tender human love and its irresistible humor. Mr. Riley, at his best and in his narrow but attractive field, is inimitable. No poet since Burns has sung so close to the ear of the common people of the country. His "Hoosier" lyrics and his RHYMES OF CHILDHOOD come very near to the line of perfection.—*New York Independent*.

It is a wonderful thing to be able to look into a little child's heart and write of what is found there. James Whitcomb Riley's RHYMES OF CHILDHOOD give evidence of this power which only a very few possess. They are all sympathetic, and have, besides, humor, pathos and the true poetic touch.—*Ladies' Home Journal, Philadelphia*.

James Whitcomb Riley's simple verse has won a lasting place in the hearts of old and young, and the reasons for this are plain. He has a quick and fine appreciation of the beauties in what might seem to some only the commonplace and humdrum side of nature, and he opens our eyes to see the poetry in the very things that have seemed to us the dullest of prose.—*Public Opinion, Washington, D. C.*

Mr. Riley is one of the most successful of our younger poets, and the cause is not far to seek. He has dealt with intimate and homely themes from the standpoint of the common man. He has not tried to write epics, or dramas of Rome or India. He has dealt with life, love and death, childhood, manhood, womanhood—as men and women in the common walks of earth feel and touch them all, and his success is assured. He has no rival to-day in this work, and the work itself is likely to come into greater estimation each year.—*Boston Transcript*.



## The Flying Islands of the Night.

A weird and grotesque drama in verse. In this book Mr. Riley's peculiar genius displays a force and continuity not intimated in any previous work. The argument and plot are radically different from any known drama, fantastical in the highest degree and beyond question his most remarkably quaint and peculiar work, since in it he displays a spirit of ingenuity together with a depth and height of imagination that his work has never hitherto suggested. In fact, one high in literary criticism has said that "we may very safely doubt if this most strange and beautiful creation has any parallel in the range of purely fanciful and idealistic verse. Its theme, its startling poise and sustained flight, its capricious buoyancy and ever-varying conceits, its 'quips and cranks and wanton wiles'—all conspire to mark it, signally and conclusively, as the most deliciously intrepid and audacious performance ever yet contributed to the lists of poetic masterpieces."

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THE FLYING ISLANDS OF THE NIGHT, by James Whitcomb Riley, fully justifies the author in his attempt at a sustained dramatic effort, and had he published nothing else it would of itself give him a prominent place among the foremost poets of his time. It is more than verse. It is a poem.—*Boston Traveller*.

So wild are the rythmical fantasies embodied in James Whitcomb Riley's new drama, THE FLYING ISLANDS OF THE NIGHT, that it requires a very robust imagination to keep pace with them.—*Buffalo Courier*.

As the author states, this is "Thynge of Wytchencrof—an Idle Dreme." This latest production of the popular Western author is a dramatic poem in three acts. The verse, while being neither heroic or lyric, partakes of the character of both. The entire poem is of the nature of a burlesque epic.—*Philadelphia Item*.

A weird and grotesque drama in verse. In this book Mr. Riley's peculiar genius displays a force and continuity not intimated in any previous work. The argument and plot are radically different from any known drama, fantastical in the highest degree, and beyond question his most remarkably quaint and peculiar work, since in it he displays a spirit of ingenuity together with a depth and height of imagination that his work has never hitherto suggested.—*Baltimore News*.

Mr. Riley now and then lays aside the dialect in which his earliest successes were achieved for the more accepted forms of spelling and construction, and both the poems named above are instances of this sort of departure from his first method. The "Old Sweetheart" is a simple little reminiscent poem of nine stanzas, each of which occupies a page of the handsome flat quarto volume, with an illustration either in colors or monochrome. In THE FLYING ISLANDS OF THE NIGHT Mr. Riley has attempted a bolder and more original flight. It is a weird, fantastic drama, the scene of which is laid in Spirkland, one of the flying islands of the night.—*New Orleans Times-Democrat*.



## Green Fields and Running Brooks.

Over one hundred miscellaneous poems, comprising the serious, humorous, sentimental, descriptive dialect and child lore in which Mr. Riley is so happy. Facile princeps, Nature's true exponent, he gilds the homely with poetic glory and makes beautiful the trivial things, idealizing the commonplace in human life and nature. The versatility of the author is manifested in the wide range of the imagination disclosed in this collection of his poems. There is a tone of human nearness that challenges comprehension and compels appreciation by the feeling that the poet has met the exigencies of life, reveled in the surprises of experience and dreamed in the languor of romance. The verses are a source of unending delight.

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